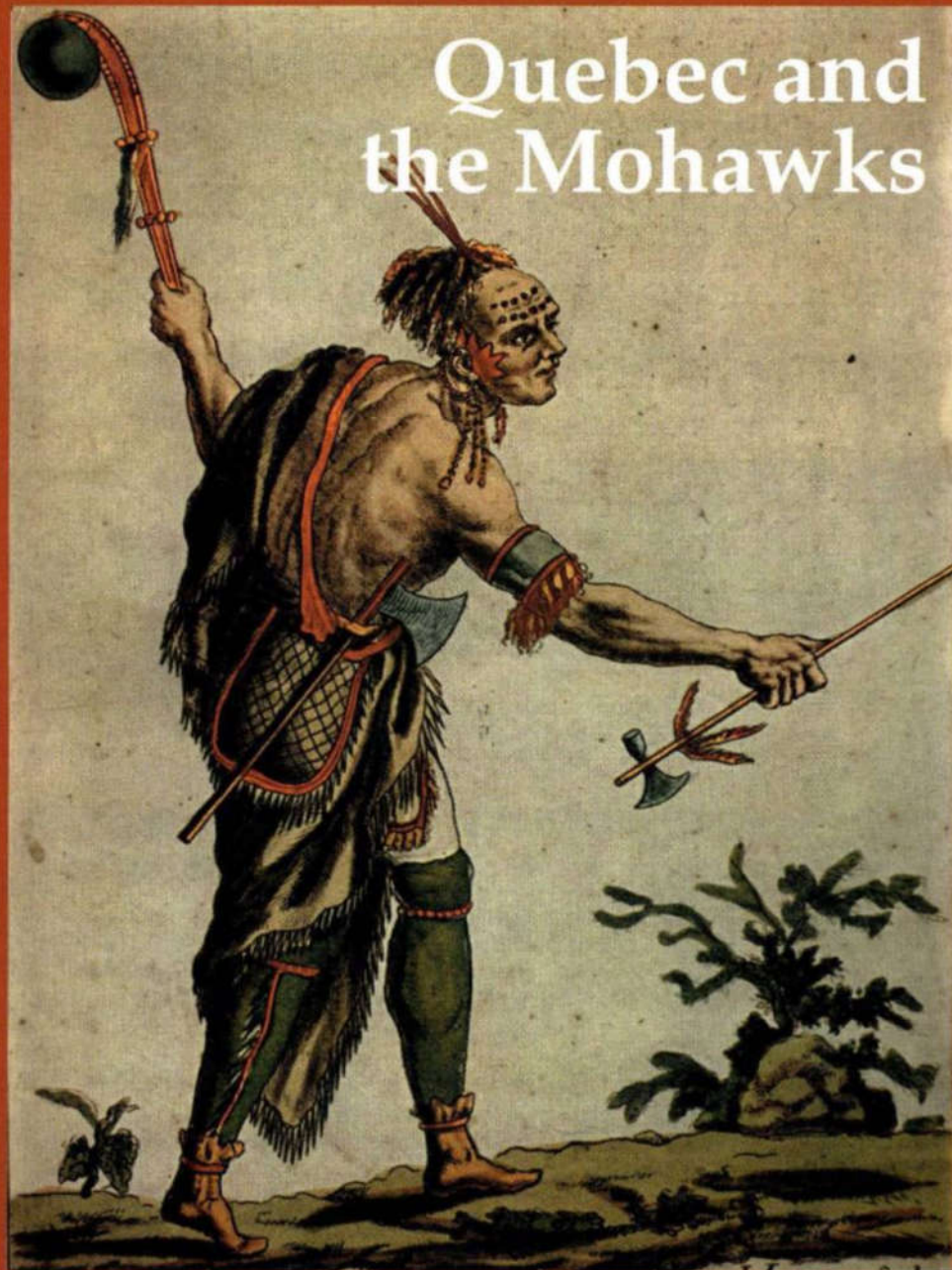


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Vol. 76:2

2 EXPLORATIONS

Christopher Dafoe: on the fabulous invalid.

4 THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

We celebrated 1967 as dark clouds gathered.

By J.M. BUMSTED

16 OUR LODGE IN THE WILDERNESS

Alma Dick-Lauder: Victorian eccentric.

By PAUL GRIMWOOD

23 THE TREATIES OF 1760

Mohawk pacts reverberate across two centuries.

By JOHN THOMPSON

29 THE BEAST OF WAR & THE LAKE

German prisoners in Canadian cottage country.

By JAKE MACDONALD

32 'LIVING PICTURES'

The movies come to Canada, 1896.

By PETER STEVEN

41 FRANK SLIDE

Did greed bring a mountain down?

By ALLEN SEAGER

48 BOOKS / 51 THE PACKET

54 WRITERS OF HISTORY

Christopher Moore: history on-line.

ON THE COVER:

Iroquois warrior, 1787.

By J. Grasset de St. Sauveur.

Library of Congress.



The Fabulous Invalid

Can Canada survive? In the months since the most recent Quebec sovereignty referendum, Canadians have been asking the old, troublesome question again. Many fear that the end is now in sight and that the nation will shortly break up, with some parts drifting into the orbit of the United States while the surviving fragments bicker on into decline and insignificance, a kind of Northern Balkans.

To some, the Northern nation was never really a viable proposition, created, as it was, out of such curious and dissimilar component parts. To them, the fact that it has survived as long as it has is, in itself, a kind of miracle — even, possibly, a mistake.

A significant number of Canadians, however, are convinced that the suffering nation can be saved, but there is little unanimity about how to effect the cure. Some feel that a hard line is essential, while others suggest that the time has come to set aside the possibly outdated model created by the Fathers of Confederation in order to fashion something new and spectacular for the twenty-first century — perhaps a connected group of “nation-states”.

Canada, like that other “fabulous invalid” the theatre, seems to be constantly on the point of collapse and yet, time and again, the prophets of doom have been confounded. It is almost as if crisis and contentious debate serve to keep us alive. Because we tend to neglect our own history, we imagine that the difficulties of national survival have only recently come to plague us, but, in fact, debate, discord and self-doubt have been a way of life for us throughout our history. We love the approval of other nations, but we have traditionally been hard on ourselves.

“There is no galvanizing a corpse!” wrote a jaded editorialist in the *Toronto Leader* in 1870. “Canada is dead — dead church, dead commerce, dead people. A poor, priest-ridden, politician-ridden, doctor-ridden, lawyer-ridden land. No energy, no enterprise, no snap!” At our gloomiest moments today many of us might temporarily agree with that grim assessment. Such ruthless self-criticism usually takes place during a long Canadian winter with a high wind chill. A few warm spring days tend to remove such feelings of despair.

Well, not always despair. The Honourable Thomas D’Arcy McGee brought a ray or two of sunshine to a winter day when he rose in the old Canadian Legislative Assembly one February day in 1865 to participate in the debate over Confederation. “Really, Mr. Speaker,” he said, “the attempt to fix the parentage of this child of many

fathers is altogether absurd and futile. It is almost as ridiculous as the attempt to fix the name of this new Confederation, in advance of the decision of the Gracious Lady to whom the matter is to be referred. I have read in one newspaper published in a western city not less than a dozen attempts of this nature. One individual chooses Tuponia and another Hochelaga, as a suitable name for the new nationality. Now I would ask any hon. member of this House how he would feel if he woke up some fine morning and found himself, instead of a Canadian, a Tuponian or Hochelagander.”

McGee raised a laugh during that speech to the Canadian legislature, but, by most accounts, the debates over Confederation were considered, at the time, to be fairly dreary affairs, without much thunder or bombast. The long palaver that led to the creation of a new country and a new nationality did not consist of ringing speeches and dramatic moments, as might be depicted in the movie version of the event, and the ordinary people who would actually live under the proposed new regime were only dimly aware of what was going on.

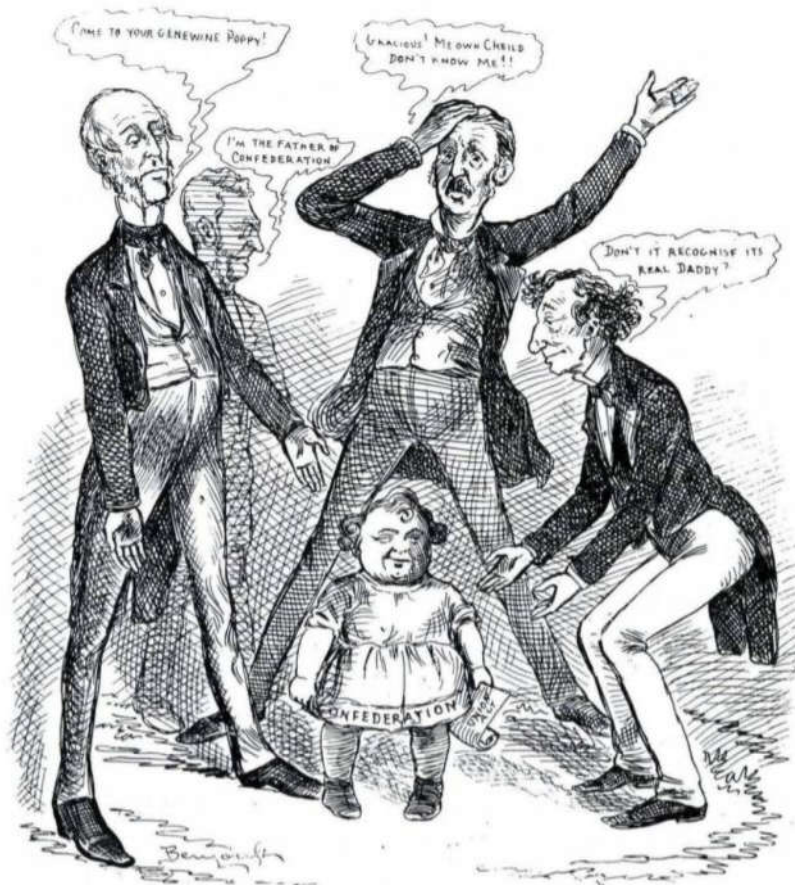
The confederation debates, if they took place today, would undoubtedly be extensively covered on Newsworld, with Don Newman as anchorman and a panel of expert journalists and academics to comment on the proceedings between commercials.

Back in 1865 they were lucky to have printed transcriptions of the discussions — there was not normally a *Hansard* for the Canadian legislature — although it is unlikely that many outside political circles gave it much study at the time.

Nevertheless, they provide us with an almost fly-on-the-wall overview of the debate that preceded the creation of the new Dominion. (The Maritime debates were not as extensively recorded).

An understanding of the forces, arguments and concerns that helped shape the new country is essential to those who now contemplate the task of preserving or improving it.

Only a little more than a century has passed since Canadians debated the proposals for a union of the British North American colonies and many of the hopes and fears expressed then may sound familiar to us today. French-speaking Quebecers feared for their survival in an ocean of English-speakers. Many felt that existing arrangements should be maintained at all costs because the *status quo*, however imperfect, might be preferable to the uncertainty of change. Some of the arguments in the confederation debates seem as remote to us as the Wars of the Roses and the voyages of the Vikings, but many of the interventions



"Grip", 30 September 1876.

could, with slight changes, have been made at any constitutional conference during the last two decades.

A knowledge of what went before prepares us for the present and arms us for the future. The past often seems curiously familiar and, in fact, it is much closer than we suppose. This fact was brought home to me not long ago when I discovered in some papers I was sorting a memoir written by my grandfather in 1937. As a young reporter of 17 in 1884 he had attended a session of the fifth Parliament of Canada in the old Parliament building in Ottawa. Sir John A. Macdonald was prime minister, flanked by three old colleagues, all Fathers of Confederation — Tupper, Tilley and Langevin. "Directly across the wide centre aisle, with the table and mace between, sat Edward Blake, leader of the Liberals, his desk piled high with ammunition in the guise of documents. Sharing his desk was a man, tall, slender, still youthful, with a gentle, scholarly face — Wilfrid Laurier."

It is interesting to note that in the Parliament of 1884 the still relatively youthful Laurier was widely seen as a spent force, even by himself. "He was regarded," my grandfather wrote in 1937, "as a man whose political future was behind him. He was thought to be a case, not uncommon in parliamentary history, of a man entering Parliament, making

a good impression and then petering out. The rebellion of 1885 brought Laurier out of his trance. The emerging of Laurier from obscurity and his rapid ascent to the supreme command of a great party is much the most dramatic incident within the scope of my political remembrance. It goes to show that there is nothing static in Canadian politics — anything can happen."

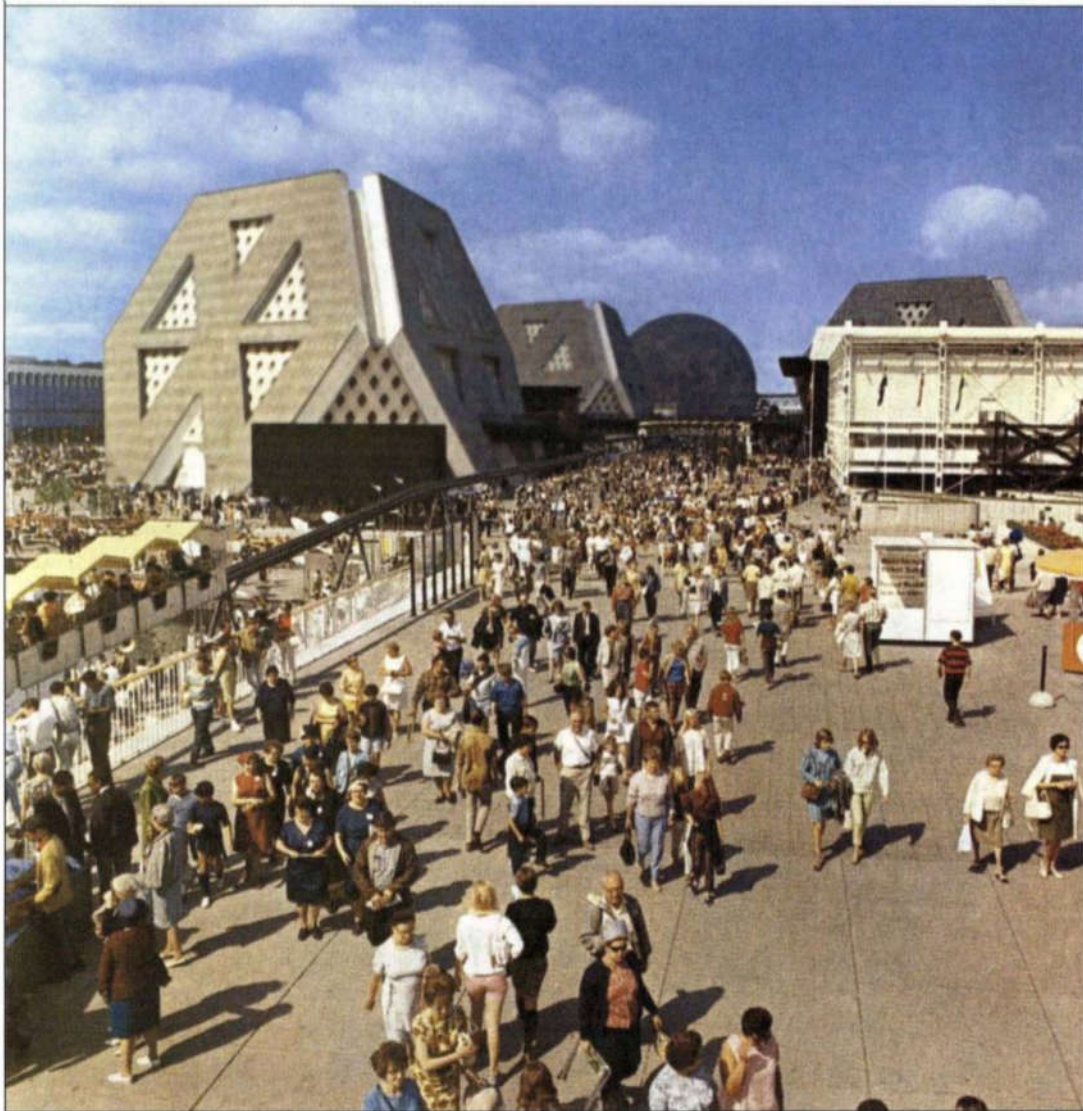
The issues of 1884 seem oddly familiar. There was warm debate over better terms for the Western provinces. Dominion-provincial relations were bitterly discussed. There was bickering over the division of powers. A century and more has not changed much. Our past is very close to us. We should know it better to better know ourselves.

In the months ahead The Beaver will present a special series of articles under the rubric "Quebec in Canada" — written by historians from French and English Canada — exploring the issues of Confederation from the original concept to the pressing concerns of today and tomorrow. In our June/July issue historian Ramsay Cook will examine the concept of "Two Founding Nations" in the light of Lucien Bouchard's recent assertion that "Canada is not a real country". ♦

THE BIRTHDAY PARTY

*As Canadians celebrated the 1967 Centennial
it seemed as if our troubles were over
— but there were dark clouds on the horizon*

By J.M. BUMSTED



On the chilly night of 31 December 1966, Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson attempted to light a flame in front of the Parliament Buildings to begin the celebration of Canada's Centennial year, while a 200-voice choir of civil servants began singing the *Centennial Anthem* composed by a Niagara Falls clergyman. The occasion was almost marred by the momentary refusal of the flame to catch alight, a hesitancy that Pearson saw in typical self-deprecating personal terms ("I never was very good at causing instantaneous fire," he later recalled) rather than as a portent redolent with national significance.

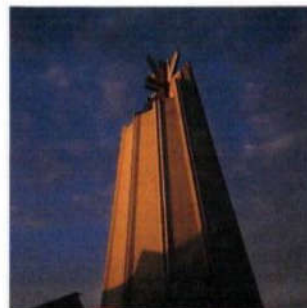
In his short speech, Pearson quoted the Canadian poet Charles Bruce: "This heaped geography ... / What is the blend of fear, strength, song and dream / Slowburning in its heart? ... / There is no answer but the wordless answers / That live in flesh, in nerves, heart, blood and bone; / The moving images that crowd our dreams." He called on Canadians "to make our country worthy of its honoured past and certain of a proud future."

Even more symbolically distressing than the brief failure of the Centennial Flame to ignite in Ottawa was the failure of Quebec that evening to join the remaining provinces in lighting a ceremonial beacon fire outside its parliament buildings. The omission was explained as "communication failure". As the satiric folk-group the Brothers-in-Law later put it in their birthday song for Canada, "We're united from sea to sea / from Newfoundland across to B.C. / Now we should just convince Quebec / Confederation's in effect / Cause we're 100 years old today." On a more positive note, about the same time that evening as the Ottawa ceremony, the tiny hamlet of Bowsman, Manitoba, 300 kilometers north of Winnipeg — which had just completed a new sewage system — began its Centennial celebration by parading more than half of the area's outhouses before a crowd of 400 before putting them to the torch. The Bowsman flames would not endure for the entire year, but the sewers would be appreciated for a generation or more, as would many of the Centennial projects undertaken in the year of Canada's birthday.

In various ways large and small, dignified and humorous, Canada celebrated its one hundredth birthday in 1967. As a nation, it had been cobbled together with considerable difficulty in the 1860s. The internal and external pressures had been severe in those years. The Americans posed what seemed a substantial external threat, which the British imperial authorities felt could only be prevented with a far more energetic and unified government in British North America. Divisions between anglophones and francophones, between what would become the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, endangered any constructive government policies in Canada, the largest province of British North America. Creation of a separate province for the French minority appeared to be essential, and the remaining provinces



Clockwise from the top: Montreal Mayor Jean Drapeau, Quebec Premier Daniel Johnson, Prime Minister Lester Pearson, Governor General Roland Michener.



Expo: British Pavilion.



President de Gaulle.



National Archives of Canada

Success! Prime Minister Pearson finally sets the eternal flame alight to begin Centennial year.

were literally dragged into the new union kicking and screaming to provide an anglophone preponderance. Prince Edward Island remained apart until 1873, and Newfoundland until 1949. The world position of the new nation was most uncertain, since neither the British nor the new Canadians thought seriously in terms of total independence or complete national sovereignty. "Canada" — the nation was named unsurprisingly after its dominant central province, which took its name from a Huron-Iroquois word *kanata* meaning "village" that had become the popular designation for the colony of New France — was officially labelled a "dominion", a term with no defined meaning within the British Empire. It was chosen chiefly because it was feared that the United States would object to the more accurate designation of "kingdom".

The prognosis for national survival had been decidedly mixed in 1867. Indeed, in terms of its initial difficulties and constraints, Canada's first hundred years witnessed a truly remarkable national success story. The nation had weathered a century of continued political and constitutional crises, a series of debilitating economic depressions, two bloody international wars, and a series of profound sociocultural and technological changes. Not only had Canada survived all these challenges to its existence, but it had prospered and developed into a rich and stable industrial nation, the envy of much of the world. Its historians were able to celebrate the first century as one of progressive national development and accomplishment. Survival had not been easy, but it had been achieved. "Within a century," boasted the

Centennial Edition of the *Canada Year Book*, "Canada passed from a limited federation to a continental confederation, from a junior nation to one of the leading industrial powers of the world."

Centennial year saw the introduction of several new symbols of Canadian sovereignty, including an official national anthem and a new system of honours. The new Canadian flag had been proclaimed by Queen Elizabeth II to become effective on 15 February 1965, although 1967 would be the year that the red maple leaf, which had caused so much controversy in 1964, would first take hold in the popular imagination. All these new symbols were federal Liberal initiatives, intended to complete the separation of Canada from Great Britain and to provide the basis of what Prime Minister Pearson called "unhyphenated" Canadian citizenship. The Pearson government was concerned both about the new restiveness in Quebec evident in the early 1960s and the large number of new immigrants who were flocking to Canada with no loyalties to the British monarchy. From the standpoint of many Canadians, including John Diefenbaker, Pearson sought to replace hyphenated citizenship (i.e., British-Canadian) with asterisked citizenship (i.e. Canadian, except in Quebec).

Diefenbaker and his supporters made their stand over the Liberal introduction into the House of Commons in 1964 of a distinctive Canadian flag with no traces of either the Union Jack or the fleur-de-lis. Irish president Eamon de Valera advised Pearson that, as the wily old revolutionary put it, "To get a flag accepted, you have to have blood on it; you have to have waved it

fighting somebody." The Irishman suggested (perhaps semi-facetiously) that what was needed were some American shots across the border and someone "mildly wounded". As it turned out, Pearson had to settle for the metaphoric blood of John Diefenbaker and other anglophone Tories. "The Chief" and his supporters successfully shot down the Pearson flag, one with three maple leaves on a white background with blue bars on each side, but were unable to replace it with a "One Canada" flag displaying both the Union Jack and the fleur-de-lis. The compromise was a flag design suggested by historian George F.G. Stanley based upon the Royal Military College flag, which won the support of all parties and factions except the Anglophone members of Diefenbaker's Progressive Conservatives and was approved by the House of Commons on 15 December 1964.

Many Canadians at the time had difficulty in understanding how grown men and women could get so excited over something as inconsequential as a flag, to the point where the proceedings of the House of Commons were disrupted for months and all sorts of important business could not be completed. As both Pearson and Diefenbaker understood, however, symbols mattered. A good many critical questions were really being debated under the guise of the flag. For both men and many of their supporters, the question of whether Canada continued to acknowledge its colonial past, particularly its ties with Great Britain, was a matter of considerable importance. For Diefenbaker, the flag was only the tip of the iceberg, for, as he wrote to a correspondent on 17 November 1964:

We have a government that is determined to bring down all our traditions. Their first consideration is to remove the Union Jack from any Canadian flag; their next has been to bring about the right of provinces to set up "associate states" within the nation.

Behind maple leaves, charged Diefenbaker, lurked the concept of "two nations". To such a prospect he was unalterably opposed, as he made clear in an impassioned, almost valedictory address to the 1966 annual meeting of his party setting forth his understanding of "One Canada". Diefenbaker lost the flag debate, and his battle for "One Canada". By 1966 he was virtually powerless, unable to mount further campaigns against a new national anthem and honours list. Indeed, despite his importance in initiating Centennial year, he was virtually invisible at the official ceremonies.

Before 1967 Canada did not have any official national anthem. *God Save the Queen* was acceptable in most parts of English Canada, except Ontario, where *The Maple Leaf Forever* was popular. Neither song could be embraced by Quebec. *O Canada* had the merit of having been written as *Chant Nationale* by the composer Calixa Lavallée (1842-1891) and Adolphe-Basile Routhier for a vice-regal occasion in Quebec City in June 1880. The familiar English words were drafted by R. Stanley Weir (1856-1926) in 1908. In 1967 Parliament approved



The Centennial "biffy parade" at Bowsman, Manitoba.

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The Confederation Train, a museum on wheels, drew large crowds at railway stations across Canada.

O Canada as the nation's official national anthem, just in time for the Centennial celebrations. Its opening notes had already been programmed into the whistle of the Confederation Train," one of the most popular of federal Centennial projects which left Ottawa to cross the country on 1 January 1967. Most Canadians initially sang the new national anthem self-consciously, if at all, at public occasions and sporting events. A vast majority were, to tell the truth, not very familiar with the words. Many people in 1967 preferred the catchy birthday song written by pop composer Bobby Gimby for the Centennial, sung in both languages on a best-selling recording by Bobby "and the Kids". It began, "Ca-na-da, We Love Thee," continuing "It's another anniversary of – Confederation! Everybody sing!"

Governor-General Lord Monck in 1866 had recommended a distinct order of knighthood for Canada, to be known as the "Order of St. Lawrence". But the proposal was set aside by the Colonial Office on the grounds that it would weaken the imperial connection. Instead, the governor-general was allowed to submit a few names each year for honours within existing British lists. This practice continued until 1919, when honours for Canadians were ended by vote of the House of Commons. A "Canada" medal was created under Mackenzie King in 1943, but it was never awarded. The new system of honours was approved by cabinet and implemented by Order in Council, announced in the Commons by Pearson on 17 April 1967. No parliamentary opposition was voiced to the scheme. The centrepiece of that system, the Order of Canada, was begun on 1 July

1967 with the announcement of its first recipients, including Maureen Forrester, Hugh MacLennan, and Vincent Massey.

For Canadians, 1967 was not only a year for celebration, but for stocktaking. Prime Minister Pearson set the tone when he lit the Centennial flame late in 1966: "It is a time to assess our national condition. It is a time to appreciate the honourable place we hold in the world community gained by sacrifice in war and service in peace." In every corner of the nation, in every field of endeavour, someone was to be found chronicling the changes of a century or comparing 1867 with 1967, to the advantage of the latter. The year 1967 probably marked the high-point of the Canadian historical enterprise in several senses. In the first place, the entire occasion was set in an historical context. Alvin Hamilton, the minister in the Diefenbaker government who had taken the lead in urging a Centennial celebration as early as 1958, had insisted that the focus should be historical, to make 1967 "a year of personal significance and of national importance." "We wish to know," began the Royal Bank's *A Conspectus of Canada, Centennial Year 1967*, published in January 1967, "by what road our ancestors travelled to make it possible for Canada to celebrate a hundred years as a nation." The *Canada Year Book* insisted, "the years between 1867 and 1967 provide, in a very real sense, an historic measuring rod."

In his first initiatives of 1958, Alvin Hamilton not only reminded his colleagues of the forthcoming birthday, but began correspondence with leading Canadian

academics about the need for biographical studies of the Fathers of Confederation. Hamilton did not succeed in getting the federal government to subsidize directly much serious historical or biographical research, but a major biographical project — the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* — did become associated with the Centennial. The "DCB", as it was called, was extensively supported by the Canada Centennial Commission and ultimately the Canada Council and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada with federal funds, and did ultimately produce major biographical re-evaluations of most of the Fathers of Confederation.

A General Editor was appointed early in 1959, about the same time that Alvin Hamilton was canvassing Canadian historians about biographies. A French edition was announced two years later.

Producing volumes "concerned with the Confederation period" became a major goal of the DCB, although it did not manage to bring any out in time for the Centennial celebrations. Nevertheless, the very organization of the work was to a substantial extent controlled by the Centennial grant and objective. Major biographical dictionaries take many years to produce, and the DCB decided against the purely alphabetical organization of most previous models, including the British and American ones. Instead, it opted for a "period" arrangement by death date, which enabled it to conceive of bringing forward in terms of time of publication the volumes most likely to include the Fathers of Confederation which had been financed by the Centennial Commission grant. Thus the period 1870-1880 was covered in Volume X, published in 1972, out of sequence as the third volume to appear. The Centennial Commission also sponsored a *Biographical Dictionary of Senators and Members of the House of Commons, 1867-1967*, which was completed, and several other projects (such as *Confederation Debates in the Atlantic Provinces* and "the Papers of the Prime Ministers", which were not.)

The Canadian historical profession (academic branch) had also responded to the anniversary with a "Centenary Series", a nineteen-volume collection of surveys of Canada's past by the nation's leading historians, edited by Donald Creighton and William L. Morton. Perhaps characteristically for academics, not all the volumes were ready by Centennial year. A number of other Centennial volumes featuring Canada's historians, both as academics and as popular historians, appeared under the aegis of other publishers. The two editors-in-chief of the Centenary Series each produced his own account of the Confederation period and the dynamics of the unification process. In addition, there were other historically-related activities, such as the location and restoration by the Boy Scouts of Canada of the graves of the Fathers of Confederation.

If the historical focus was a natural one for the Centennial, that anniversary virtually coincided — quite fortuitously — with the natural climax internationally of

a favourable era for historical writing. That writing had certain biases. It tended to concentrate on larger historical units, such as nations. It tended to be fascinated with political process and to eschew the study of ideology. It was extremely fond of political biography. Most importantly, it tended to think progressively in terms of growth and development, rather than of collapse and disintegration. Scholars of the time tended to affirm the values of their society rather than to criticize. In Canada, these international tendencies combined with internal factors to produce what one historian has labelled the "national school" of Canadian historical scholarship. After 1867, history within the academy would develop in quite different directions, as would scholarship in a variety of other fields in the humanities and social



Queen Elizabeth cuts the Centennial birthday cake.

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sciences. The ringing national affirmation of Canada's historians in the mid-1960s could probably have not been replicated even five years later.

Although the Centennial celebration was supposed to be a non-partisan event, it was hardly organized in a spirit of accord. Given the fierce partisanship of the Pearson-Diefenbaker years and the important public issues being debated at the time, this was hardly surprising. There was disagreement and competition between Quebec and the other provinces, as well as between the

provinces and Ottawa. To these larger undertones came others. There was also some fundamental disagreement between those who thought that the Centennial should be uplifting and inspirational, and those who thought it should be bread and circuses, an opportunity to dispense largesse and "fun". This disagreement became epitomized in the running battles between John Fisher, Chief Centennial Commissioner, and Judy LaMarsh, federal minister in charge of the Centennial.

There was also considerable confusion and overlapping of responsibility for Centennial celebrations. Main responsibility for organizing the Centennial celebrations was ostensibly to be the responsibility of a Centennial Commission, first established by the Diefenbaker government upon the recommendation of a group calling itself the Canadian Centenary Council, headed by Charles M. (Bud) Drury, a prominent Liberal. After preliminary meetings and the passage of the National Centennial Act in 1961, the Centennial Commission was established by Act of Parliament in 1963 as a corporation headed by a Commissioner and Associate Commissioner with twelve directors appointed by the Governor-in-Council. There was also a National Centennial Conference comprised of ordinary citizens, which first met in October 1963, but which constantly and correctly complained it had nothing to do. The commission was not to be a permanent government body, and it was used for patronage purposes and as a dumping ground for individuals hard to place elsewhere. In order to attract competent people, its permanent staff had to be paid above-normal civil service rates. But the most important problem facing the commission was the absence of precedent. How did one go about celebrating a Centennial? What was appropriate and what was not? To

what extent was the task of the commission to liberate imaginations and to what extent to rubber stamp other people's initiatives, often themselves redolent of the pork barrel? The Centennial Commission was not simply a cheerleading organization, although the administration of the key Centennial Grants Program and the Confederation Memorial Program were in the hands of a National Committee of two representatives from each province chaired by the Secretary of State. Other key Centennial events, such as Expo 67 and the Pan-American Games, were financed and administered quite independently of the administrative framework of the National Centennial Act of 1961.

The man ostensibly responsible for organizing and administering the Centennial Commission was John Fisher, known as "Mr. Canada" for his years of attempting to arouse Canadian patriotism and nationalism as a broadcaster. Born in Frosty Hollow, New Brunswick (later the home of G.F.G. Stanley, the man who had suggested the maple leaf flag design), Fisher had begun broadcasting in Halifax and had moved to CBC Toronto after the Second World War, where his radio programme, "John Fisher Reports", brought him renown as an advocate for Canada. In 1956 he had moved to the Canadian Tourist Association and in 1961 became a special assistant to John Diefenbaker, quickly using his position to advance the idea of a great birthday celebration to mark Canada's Centennial. In 1963 Diefenbaker appointed Fisher as Chief Centennial Commissioner, heading a commission with twelve directors. Fisher's appointment survived the demise of Diefenbaker, but was never entirely secure. Moreover, he had a good many other problems. Not an experienced administrator, Fisher was bound to have trouble in presiding over an agency devoted

Bobby Gimby, the pied piper of Centennial Year, leads a small army of children in one of the many parades held in 1967.



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extensively to administrative activity, particularly since he spent most of his time travelling across the country attempting (with much success) to stir the public. Gradually, the actual administration of the Centennial Commission fell into the hands of two civil servants who served as Associate Commissioners, Georges Gauthier and later Gilles Bergeron. Fisher complained continually that he was not consulted and kept informed.

Relations between Fisher and Judy LaMarsh, who had replaced Maurice Lamontagne as Secretary of State in 1966, were bound to be uneasy. The two were from different political parties and had both different visions for Centennial and different agendas. LaMarsh was from the outset worried about a "French-English split in the Commission," and as Secretary of State was responsible for implementing previous agreements with the provinces for Centennial memorial buildings, with the federal government matching funds put up by the provinces and municipalities. She and Fisher had several well-publicized confrontations over authority. Given the administrative complexities and overlappings of the Centennial celebration, as well as the fabled Canadian phlem, those responsible for the observance were certainly entitled to feel a certain apprehension about its success.

One major reason for the somewhat unexpected popularity of Centennial Year was clearly Expo 67, a project outside the umbrella administered under the National Centennial Act. The federal government began meeting for preliminary planning purposes in 1960, although many of those in attendance were not impressed with the process. At that meeting, however, the Quebec representatives brought forward the idea of a major world's fair in Montreal for 1967, already advocated by Senator Mark Drouin in 1958 at the time of the Brussels Fair. As "Expo 67" this scheme would become the centrepiece of the Centennial Celebration.

The path to a properly sanctioned international exhibition was not easy. Canada had applied in 1958 to the International Exhibitions Bureau in Paris to hold in 1967 a "first-category" exhibit, only one of which could be held in any given year and in which participating countries constructed their own pavilions at their own expense. It lost out to the Soviet Union, which was to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its nationhood the same year as Canada, chiefly because Byelorussia and Ukraine voted for the Russian proposal. But the Russians had given up their plans by the early 1960s, mainly because of the costs involved. With hindsight we can see that withdrawal as part of the serious economic difficulties already being faced in post-Stalin Russia. We can also see the re-emergence of the Montreal initiative, led by Mayor Jean Drapeau, as a potentially very expensive birthday celebration, particularly given the fact that only four years were left to plan and construct the entire project after Drapeau had his permission from Paris and support from the federal government in Canada. Such a



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Judy LaMarsh, Secretary of State.

time-frame was a built-in recipe for cost overruns, labour problems, and corruption. The *Toronto Star* in September of 1963 suggested that "The simplest solution is to call off the whole thing," a policy advocated by several of Lester Pearson's ministers in the minority government which replaced the Diefenbaker Tories early in 1963. Even as he formally inaugurated the project on 13 August 1963, Pearson commented publicly, "I would be less than frank if I did not add that I feel we all have cause for concern over the magnitude of the tasks that must be accomplished if the fair is to be the success it must be."

Drapeau was a very persuasive individual. He succeeded in persuading a reluctant Lester B. Pearson that the exhibition had to be staged on man-made islands in the St. Lawrence, which Pearson had thought "one of the silliest things I ever heard," given the amount of land available in Canada. The new islands may have been an aesthetic triumph, but they were considerably more expensive than intended. Instead of creating them from sand dredged from the river bottom, unexpected solid rock underneath the layers of silt meant that 25 million tons of fill had to be carted into Montreal. Drapeau was not only persuasive, he was a French-Canadian. Whether any other province besides Quebec could have gotten federal government and public support for such a chimerical venture is doubtful. The federal government was extremely generous to Expo, agreeing to pick up half of the deficit, the remainder being divided between the province (at 37½ percent) and Montreal (at 12½ percent).

Jean Drapeau (born in 1916) first entered public life as a nationalist follower of Abbé Lionel Groulx, running as a losing candidate in a 1942 byelection and in the provincial election of 1944. He first came to power as Mayor of Montreal in 1954, spending the next years tussling with Maurice Duplessis and shifting in and out of office. He became known as a mayor fond of the flamboyant project but neglectful of bread and butter urban issues. Expo was a perfect illustration of Drapeau's style from beginning to end. A nearby mayor complained about "building marvels and monuments" while the poor "continued to wallow in unsanitary dwellings". Fences seven feet high appeared to hide the poverty along major boulevards entering the city, and both FLQ slogans and graffiti soon appeared on the fences. One slogan read, "*Visitez les Slums*".

Meanwhile, in the board rooms of the exhibition planners, there was serious discussion of the possibility of dismantling the Eiffel Tower and putting a sign on it reading "Gone to Montreal for Expo 67." Only the unwillingness of the owners of the Eiffel Tower to co-operate killed the proposal, and their reluctance was because they feared that they would not be allowed to re-erect it. Instead, a new tower was planned for Montreal to rival the Leaning Tower of Pisa and the Eiffel Tower. It was intended to be a tourist attraction for Montreal, but was never built because of cost and public objections. Drapeau's ingenuity did make possible the preservation of Moshe Safdie's model apartment complex, which could not be finished in time and was therefore to be razed. The mayor suggested instead that Habitat 67 should be advertised as deliberately unfinished "so that the visitors could see how it was built."

The total cost of Expo 67, estimated at \$167 million in 1964, can never truly be calculated, although it probably exceeded a billion and a half dollars. The desperation resulting from deadlines meant that money was thrown around with abandon. Indirect expenses, such as the improvement of Quebec's highway network to get tourists to the exhibition — roughly \$500 million — and the cost of building pavilions on the site — \$300 million — were not included in the official cost of \$430 million. Perhaps equally significantly, the federal government did not include its support of Expo 67 in its financial statements of the expense of the Centennial Celebrations, which were listed as \$56 million as of 31 March 1967. Despite these monumental costs, or perhaps because of them, Expo 67 opened on 28 April to great public acclaim. Peter Newman of the *Toronto Star* spoke for many Canadians when he wrote:

The cannonade of fireworks which marked the opening of Expo ... may in retrospect turn out to have been one of those rare moments that change the direction of a nation's history ... This is the greatest thing we have ever done as a nation and

surely the modernization of Canada — of its skylines, of its styles, its institutions — will be dated from this occasion and from this fair ... The more you see of it, the more you're overwhelmed by a feeling that if this is possible, that if this little sub-arctic, self obsessed country of 20,000,000 people can put on this kind of a show, then it can do almost anything.

While satisfaction that Canada had succeeded in creating Expo 67 against all the odds was part of the nation's reaction, even better was the fact that the entire world seemed to like it. Moreover, the exhibition focussed foreign attention on Canada — and on Montreal and Quebec. Even Ed Sullivan used Expo as the setting and stage for one of his television shows. Mordecai Richler may have disparaged the exhibition in a radical American tabloid as "a good-taste Disneyland", but he was both a minority voice and an unhappy Canadian. Many of the world's leading journalists came to Montreal in 1967 — there were 35,416 press passes issued — and they were in virtually unanimous agreement that Expo had lifted Canada out of its international image as the home of red-coated mounties, dog sleds, and Anne of Green Gables.

From the outset, the theme of Expo had been "Terre des Hommes", originally the title of a book by the French romantic Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (1900-44), who wrote, "To be a man is to feel that one's own stone contributes to building the edifice of the world." But what most struck visitors to Expo 67 was the site and the architecture. To a considerable extent, the best architects had combined the short time-frame for construction with new building techniques. The result was "Space-frame" architecture, where large spaces were covered at minimal costs by distributing weight widely and employing materials such as aluminum and plastic. The frame for the much-acclaimed Netherlands pavilion, for example, consisted of 33 miles of 57,000 pieces of three foot aluminum tubing. The tubes themselves were a Canadian design, and had never previously been employed in building construction. The German pavilion was a huge tent with many peaks, built of translucent plastic hung over steel mesh. The American pavilion was a twenty-story geodesic dome or bubble designed by Buckminster Fuller. Although laymen and professionals alike oohed and aahed at these fabulous triumphs — and some professionals predicted that they were the wave of the future — none of them ever would remake architecture in a new image, principally because they had been designed as impressive but temporary structures. While Moshe Safdie's multi-unit housing cells, Habitat 67, attracted considerable attention — one of the units permanently suspended from a five-storey crane — its concepts were not to be often replicated, particularly in Canada. The 158 units constructed of prefabricated concrete boxes were leased initially at \$650 per month

after Expo 67 had ended, but the complex quickly became a disaster area. At a cost of \$22,195,920, about \$140,000 per unit of housing, the units had to be rented at an average rental of \$1,000 per month to recover costs. Given its costs and engineering problems, it is not surprising that Habitat 67 never caught on. Not all the pavilions and other buildings even began life as artistic triumphs, although critics singled out the Air Canada structure and the United Kingdom pavilion as particularly useless.

The pavilions were, of course, filled in a variety of different ways, ranging from the American decision to emphasize its nation's distinctive pop culture to Czechoslovakia's Nativity Scene, featuring 2,000 wooden figures — 300 of them moving — carved in eighteenth-century Bohemia. Many nations brought in magnificent works of art for their own pavilions, or contributed to the fine-arts gallery "Man the Creator". The various national exhibitors obviously competed with one another for public attention, and the Cold War continued to live culturally at Expo. As a result of the need for national triumphs, internationally-renowned musical companies constantly performed. More than twenty major orchestras (including the Concertgebouw, Vienna, Berlin, Czech, and New York Philharmonic) appeared at Expo 67. They were joined by eight great opera companies (including the Bolshoi, La Scala, Vienna, Hamburg State Opera, Royal Opera of Stockholm), and ten ballet companies (among them the New York City Ballet, the Paris Opera Ballet, and the Royal Ballet of Covent Garden). Canadian soloists, groups, and ensembles also appeared, and to many people's surprise were not overshadowed by the international array. Canadian sculptors, on the other hand, by contemporary standards disgraced themselves. More than 30 pieces had been commissioned for the Expo site from Canadian sculptors, and most of the results were regarded as unsatisfactory.

In the end, more than 50,000,000 people attended Expo 67, a figure that obviously included many repeaters. More might have come if Montreal's transit workers had not gone on strike with less than 6 weeks remaining on the Expo calendar. Not everything was perfect. There was a distinct shortage of shelter for the crowds during times of bad weather, and the organizers had made little effort to provide outdoor entertainment for people standing in queues for as much as four hours. The adjacent amusement park was tawdry. Food was expensive and, given the constant crowds, often hard to obtain. But perhaps the most serious limitations were in the quantity and quality of Canadian creativity and imaginative work associated with Expo. The performing community did extremely well, as did the architects, although only Habitat 67 remained in place long after the exhibition had ended. The sculptors, artists, composers, and writers were less successful. In general, it was and



National Archives of Canada

Apartments of the future? Moshe Safdie's Habitat.

its difficult to think of a major creative legacy resulting from the vast expenditure of money on Expo 67.

The drawing power of Expo 67 contributed to an overload in Ottawa of state visits. Every head of government in the world was invited as a diplomatic matter of course to help Canada celebrate its Centennial, but a larger number than usual — 59 in total — accepted. Each had to be given identical red-carpet treatment, with an official lunch and an official dinner, speeches, and gift-giving. Sometimes the visitors were as confused as the hosts. When Prime Minister Pearson showed the Australian gift of silver goblets to the wife of the Australian prime minister, whose attention had been elsewhere, she offered the obligatory "Just what I always wanted. You couldn't have given us anything that would make us any happier." Her husband had to clarify matters, saying "You're not getting it; you're giving it!"

Ironically enough, the principal legacy of Expo 67 was exactly the one it was supposed to prevent: an increase in the perceived gulf between French Canada and the remainder of the nation. This result was not the fault of the organizers, but occurred because the behaviour of French President Charles de Gaulle while visiting Canada for the exhibition managed to expose all the raw nerves that the Centennial was supposed to soothe and heal. De Gaulle's was the least successful state visit of 1967, perhaps not even included in the official 59. Given the continuing tensions between Ottawa and Quebec City, the possibility of some sort of public scene was always present when Quebec was the venue. There had been some jostling between Ottawa and Quebec City over the protocols for the visit of the French president, including the failure of the French naval cruiser carrying

de Gaulle to fly the Canadian flag. But nobody anticipated his remarks to the French-Canadian people on national television made at Montreal City Hall on 25 July after his visit to the Expo site: "*Je vais vous confier un secret ... ce soir, Je me trouvais dans une atmosphère du même genre que celle de la Libération ... Vive Montréal, vive le Québec, vive le Québec libre.*" Between each of these last terse phrases, the French-Canadian crowd of 10,000 cheered more loudly, so that de Gaulle's final "Vives" — to "*le Canada français*" and "*la France*", none to Canada — were lost in the commotion.

All across the nation television viewers watched and heard de Gaulle's words with astonishment. Lester Pearson "listened to them almost in disbelief on television," while René Lévesque, crouched in front of a television set behind the city hall, was "paralysed a few instants." Lévesque then turned to look at the remainder of the guests present for a planned reception and later wrote, "It is rare to have such an opportunity to see the two Montreals so clearly. In a state of shock, frozen in a fury that as yet was only emitting a few anticipatory rumblings, stood the Anglophone city. As for French Montreal, except for those constrained by office or acquaintance to reserve, they did not hide broad, complicit smiles, or even, in the background, gestures more discreet but just as enthusiastic as those of the crowd in the street."

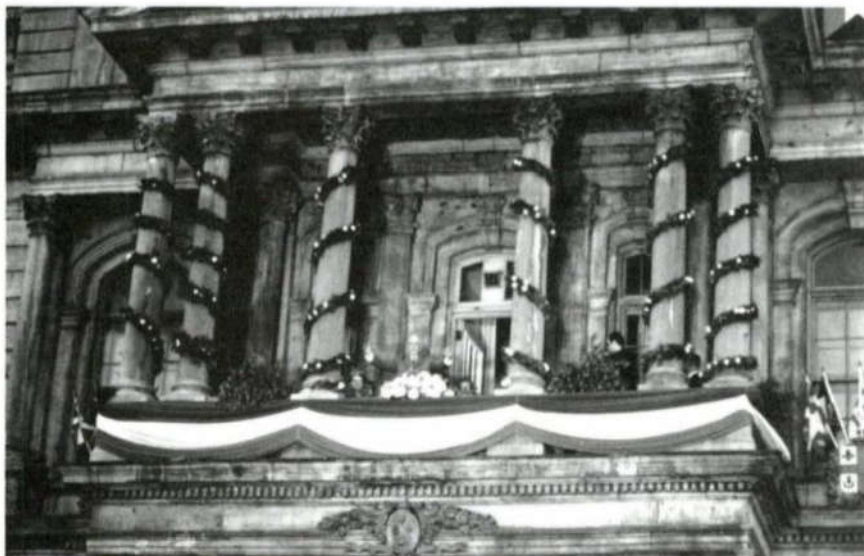
The French press was as horrified as the Canadian government at the statements, the magazine *L'Express* calling them "*le plus grand scandale diplomatique de l'après-guerre.*" The Pearson cabinet grimly objected to "certain statements made by the President" tending "to encourage the small minority of our population whose aim is to destroy Canada," and de Gaulle went home almost immediately. Before he departed, Jean Drapeau had managed to remind him publicly of the general

neglect French Canada had suffered from France for over 200 years in a banquet speech that did not repudiate de Gaulle's remarks so much as put them in the context of an autonomous Quebec.

Despite general international condemnation of his behaviour in Canada, de Gaulle was himself unrepentant and repeated the gist of his sentiments on several subsequent occasions. Moreover, the press reaction from Quebec was quite supportive of the French president, almost unanimously regarding the reaction of the Canadian government and anglophone Canadians as both typical and provocative. The French-Canadian media was particularly surprised at the vehemence of the support given Drapeau outside the province for a speech that had less attacked de Gaulle than set out the traditional arguments of older nationalists like Henri Bourassa and Lionel Groulx. De Gaulle himself returned to the question at a lengthy press conference on 26 November in Paris, which included support for Quebec achieving "*au rang d'un Etat souverain et maître de son existence nationale.*" The press conference, which lasted for nearly two hours, ranged widely over the French president's agenda. *Time* magazine on 8 December 1967 summarized by saying that de Gaulle had "called for the secession of French-speaking Quebec in Canada, kicked Britain out of Europe, threatened the Common Market with destruction, called the U.S. the principal enemy, and suavely knifed Israel." Canadian Prime Minister Lester Pearson angrily accused de Gaulle in the House of Commons of trying to destroy Canadian Confederation, to the cheers and applause of his audience. Whatever de Gaulle had intended, his actions had helped to polarize Canadians.

But not even Charles de Gaulle could damagingly rain on the Canadian parades of 1967. To the surprise of many observers, Canadians took to Centennial Year with

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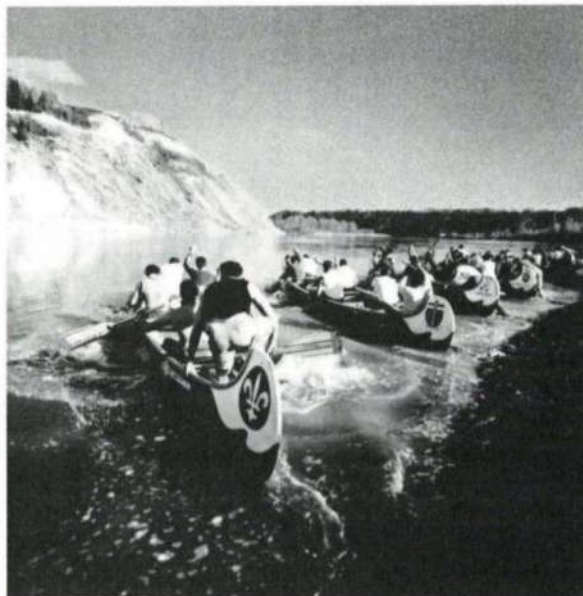


"*Vive le Québec libre!*"
President de Gaulle pins
his colours to the mast,
Montreal City Hall, 1967.
The Canadian government
found his remarks
"unacceptable".

enormous enthusiasm. They were certainly helped by large government expenditures. The construction industry and virtually every community across the nation (as well as Montreal) benefited from Centennial projects: 568 recreational centres, 538 parks, 442 community halls, 188 municipal buildings, 144 libraries, museum and art galleries, as well as seven theatres, one UFO landing pad, and one statue of a leprechaun riding a turtle. Canadians travelled across Canada, some on subsidized interchanges but most for the sheer enjoyment and excitement of it. Many described their travel as a "personal Centennial Project". Those who did not travel could experience a variety of Centennial roadshows brought to them, including the Confederation train and 8 truck-propelled caravans, the Centennial Tattoo, 13 cultural groups, and the RCMP Musical Ride. The number of historical re-enactments brought enormous pressures upon the costume suppliers, one of whom rented out 300 Sir John A. Macdonald costumes, 150 redcoat uniforms, 100 gold-panning outfits, and 250 pioneer costumes. Many parents rented 1867 costumes for their children, and then took photographs for Christmas cards.

The First of July 1967 was a day of celebrations that still live in the memories of Canadians. Numbers were usually regarded as more important than quality. In Ottawa, 50,000 people lit sparklers just before midnight, then joined the Peace Tower carillon in *O Canada*. The next day, Queen Elizabeth herself cut the 20-foot-high birthday cake, and the kids consumed 40,000 cupcakes, 40,000 servings of ice cream, and 33,000 soft drinks. In Yellowknife, golfers played a non-stop tournament through the arctic "night". In Halifax, celebrators ate 13,000 bowls of fish chowder. In Winnipeg the crews of eight voyageur canoes racing from Alberta to Expo entertained 35,000 spectators on the Assiniboine River. The Vancouver birthday cake, part of a mile-long parade through the streets of downtown, held 100 girls dressed as candles. Perhaps the most unusual event occurred later in July, when the first Great International Bathtub Race was held between Nanaimo and Vancouver. Most of the entrants raced fibre glass tubs with outboard motors, and the winner was awarded the Centennial Order of the Bath after a successful time of 3 hours 26 minutes 29 seconds. (This event has since become an annual one.)

While Montreal hosted Expo, Winnipeg was for two weeks in late July and early August visited by the Pan-American Games. The success of this sporting meet was a tribute to the city's volunteer spirit. Not only did volunteers organize and run virtually every aspect of the Games, but striking workmen volunteering their labour completed the facilities when Manitoba's construction industry was shut down by a strike weeks before the opening ceremony. Judy LaMarsh made few friends in Winnipeg when she remarked, "I don't know why Winnipeg got the games in the first place. If it was up to



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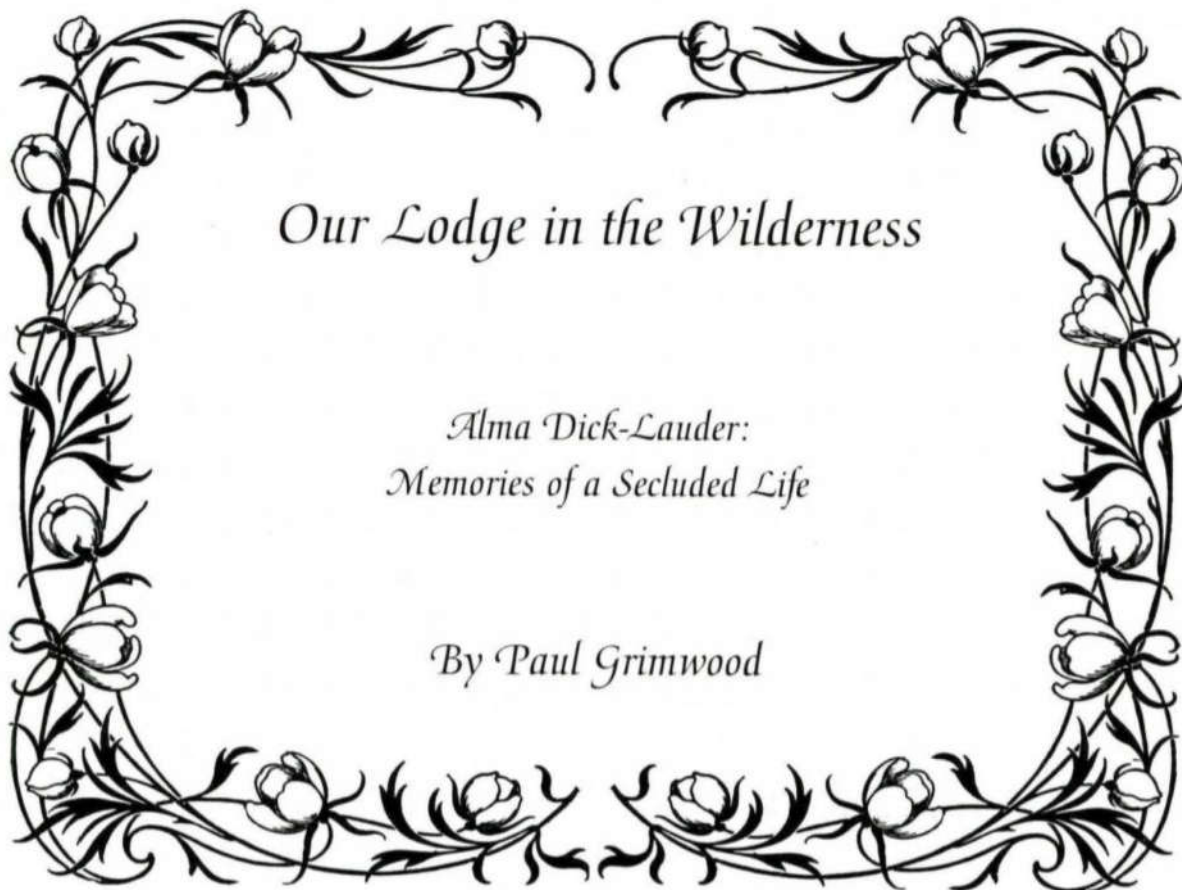
Across Canada by canoe: voyageurs set off on Alberta-to-Expo journey.

me I'd say give them to a sporting city." The weather was not very co-operative. Prince Philip opened the Games in the middle of a torrent, and the value of the first installation of Tartanurf on an international track facility was proved when volunteers swept the water off the track on a regular basis. Canadian hearts were won by swimmer Elaine Tanner, the "Mighty Mouse" from British Columbia, who won two gold medals and several others, setting records in the process. "I always yawn before we start," she remarked, "then I just go." Most of those in attendance at the Games — over a million tickets were sold — were Winnipeggers, who really got into the spirit of the occasion. Unlike Expo 67, the Pan-Am Games left behind a legacy of useful buildings, including an Olympic-class swimming pool and international track and field facilities.

Throughout the year 1967, all across Canada, people "got the spirit". Few complained of the lavish federal grants, and what most remembered was that 1967 had been a year of "fun", a year in which Canada had truly "come of age". Centennial Year had succeeded beyond the wildest expectations of its earliest proponents. ♦

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Our Lodge in the Wilderness

Alma Dick-Lauder:
Memories of a Secluded Life

By Paul Grimwood

The full moon was just beginning to twinkle on the greenhouse roof as we reached our own lodge in the wilderness and groped for the key under the hollyhocks and then suddenly remembered it was in our pocket and oh, how good it was to hear the kettle sing and indulge in unlimited tea — gift of the gods! and to "lave the weary feet" and not so good to discover a blister the size of a bumble bee on one of my toes, and so to bed, as Pepys says...

The writer of these words was Alma Dick-Lauder, who spent most of her life in the village of Ancaster, Ontario. Unlike Samuel Pepys, the diarist who had the Restoration, the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London as material for his pen, Alma Dick-Lauder will probably remain among the obscure, yet her voice speaks through her diaries as surely as Pepys does through his.

Mrs. Dick-Lauder was a frank, unconventional woman. She was born Alma Leith in a house on Vine Street in Hamilton in 1854. She could claim a connection with some of Scotland's most brilliant literary figures through her mother, Eleanor Ferrier Leith (1814-1900), the second wife of George Gordon Browne Leith

(1812-1887), himself the second son of Major-General Sir George Alexander Leith, Bart., KCB, M.P. Alma's great-aunt, the novelist Susan Ferrier, was considered by Sir Walter Scott to be the Scottish constituent of "that feminine trio to which England supplied Jane Austen and Ireland Maria Edgeworth." Her great-uncle was John Wilson, perhaps better known under his pseudonym of "Christopher North". In his youth a great friend of Wordsworth and Coleridge, his writing for *Blackwood's Magazine* was extensive and well regarded. Her uncle, Eleanor Leith's brother, was James Ferrier, known for his philosophical works, primarily *The Institutes of Metaphysics*.

Alma's literary career was much more modest. She seems to have begun her published writing with a letter to *The Canada Farmer* in 1866, when she was 12. Later in life, she was one of a series of local authors who wrote historical articles for the *Hamilton Spectator* which were later published in book form.

It is in her unpublished diaries, however, that the voice of this remarkable woman is heard most clearly. There are loving descriptions of her home and the beauty of the Dundas Valley, her delight in local gossip and the foibles of the people of Ancaster. There is her sense of

isolation from the community after her husband, Stair Dick-Lauder, moved to Toronto. There are glimpses of an increasing eccentricity, when she prefers the company of her pets and farm animals to that of her neighbours.

Her background had prepared her to take a place in the best society of the day, both in the genteel village of Ancaster, and in the wealthy industrial society of Hamilton. As the fifth child of wealthy and cultured parents, she was spoiled and petted until she decided to marry Stair Dick-Lauder, the grandson of a Scottish Earl, against their wishes. The Dick-Lauder marriage proved not to be a happy one, and Alma remained week after week alone in Ancaster after Stair had moved to Toronto. One of the happiest events of her life must have been the move back to her parents' home, The Hermitage, even after the sadness of her mother's death in 1900. This lovely property, built in the 1850s was a constant joy to her:

I read somewhere the other day of an inscription on a woman's tombstone in some old churchyard which added after her name and dates etc. "She was so pleasant". I think there could be no more flattering and delightful epitaph than that. "Death plucking a nettle" would be so much more applicable to the majority of women if their husbands or friends expressed their true sentiments... Few children have such a charming childhood to look back to as we over whose small heads the happy years sped all too fast in our beautiful Hermitage, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot"... What floods of memories come back of those happy days of long, long ago, of splendid summer mornings with walks to the Sulphur Spring before breakfast, the woods full of deep dark morning shadows and redolent of the smell of cool dewy moss, the sound of the hay wagon going to the field and the delight in very hot days being allowed to do lessons in the cellar, of endless fun skating and tobogganing in keen frozen air, of early days of laughing spring when the leafless braes were warm and sunny... and over all a sense of loving confidence and the unquestioning faith of childhood. (24 Feby. 1889)

Her childhood was spent in happiness there, and so were her declining years. She died inside the ruins of the mansion in 1942.

Her father, George Leith, had lived in Canada from 1835 to 1842, owning about 400 acres of property about 20 miles from Ancaster, near Binbrook. His first wife, Jemima Ramsey, died on a voyage home to Scotland in 1842, when they returned to protect Leith's financial interests after his father, mother and brother had all died within two months of one another.

His second wife, whom he married the next year in Edinburgh, was Eleanor Ferrier. Four children — Margaret, Jemima, Charlotte and Alexander — were



Alma Dick-Lauder in early life.

born to George and Eleanor Leith during the next ten years, which were spent in the comfort of Nisbet House and Bowland Castle — large country houses in the border counties in Scotland. Life at Bowland Castle was comfortable, with an indoor staff of eight servants, a gardener, groom, dairymaid and coachman. Leith took the time to pursue the "amicable lawsuit" regarding his father's estate to a successful conclusion. In 1853, Leith set out for Canada again, intending to settle temporarily or permanently, depending on conditions. The next year his wife, young family and sister-in-law, Margaret Ferrier, joined him in Hamilton.

The result of the probate of his father's will gave Leith about £12,000. Mrs. Leith's dowry of £5,000 and Miss Ferrier's capital of a further £5,000 added to the family fortunes. Leith purchased The Hermitage, a picturesque 265-acre property in a beautiful hilly area west of Ancaster near the Sulphur Spring. Several years of building produced a dignified but plain stone mansion with attendant outbuildings, two tenant farms and an entrance lodge, set in 60 acres of landscaped park. The house was furnished with expensive possessions brought from their Scottish homes, including portraits by Raeburn and Archer, sketches by Hogarth, a well-stocked library, a harp, a massive silver-service and a



A view of the main street, Ancaster, about 1900.

china dinner set presented to Leith's father by the King of Burma.

Ancaster was the oldest Ontario settlement west of Niagara. Over the years many British officers, younger sons of British gentry and their families had settled on the cleared land around the village, and formed a congenial society. While few of these families, all of whom belonged to Saint John's Anglican Church, could aspire to the wealth of George and Eleanor Leith, many of them came from a similar social background. Various accounts of life in nineteenth-century Ancaster amongst the expatriate English and Scottish tell of cricket matches, fox-hunts, croquet and lawn tennis on Sunday afternoons and all-day picnics culminating in evening dances. Life in the area resembled the pleasurable society that the Leiths had led in Scotland.

Alma's earliest surviving letter is addressed to the editor of *The Canada Farmer*, asking for advice about her poultry. It was published in July, 1866, when she was under 12 years old:

We have great advantages in the way of raising poultry, our hens having a good run in two meadows, a small orchard, a drying green, yard and a fine wood. The wood, however is rather objectionable, as it is rather frequented with foxes, who have more than once made inroads on my hen house, to my great grief and indignation.

While Alexander, Alma's brother, was sent to join the Royal Navy at the age of 13, the Leith sisters seem

to have been educated at home by their mother, aunt and governesses. Alma was also sent to Hellmuth Ladies' College in London, Ontario, from 1870-1871. She pleaded to come home and her parents brought her back to Ancaster. While her formal training was likely over at age 16, she had been taught a love of books and writing.

In a short diary of 1871, Alma describes a meeting with her then current beau, Ernest Whitaker, at a ball held by Colonel and Mrs. Gourlay at Barton Lodge, their Italianate mansion on the "mountain" overlooking Hamilton. Someone had locked the young couple in the conservatory:

Then we heard Mrs. Gourlay and Ma coming to see the flowers. We were in a great fright and hid in the furnace room. It was nice standing close to him in the dark cold room and we made it quite up there. When they had gone we came out, but the door was locked and they came back and caught us. Ma was in an awful wax, but I am glad to say that my powers of impudence and repartee never desert me at such times and I talked her out. I had another dance with E. He took me to supper. (6 Jany. 1871)

Little is known of Alma's life at The Hermitage during the next few years, although letters suggest an active social life and enjoyable family discussions:

Jem and Ma spent most of the morning abusing the Oslers [The well-known Canadian family, whose

head, Featherstone Lake Osler, was the Rector of St. John's Church] deciding which place in the inferno would be suitable for different members of that family. I with my usual wit, suggested that Briton should "reign the he cat of the lowest hell". (15 Jany. 1871)

In the spring of 1874, Stair Dick-Lauder (1853-1945) came to The Hermitage from Scotland to learn farming from George Leith. He was the fourth son of Sir John Dick-Lauder of Annfield, and a grandson of the Earl of Stair, whose seat was at Fountainhall. Because of his large debts at home, his mother had requested that he go abroad. Stair Dick-Lauder stayed with the Leiths for a year and a half, after which he started to run a stage-coach between Hamilton and Ancaster, which he continued to do until 1881. During this time, secret meetings and letters to Alma Leith brought objections from her father, and the result was their elopement to St. Mark's Anglican Church in Hamilton in December 1878. "No cards - no cake - nobody's business", as Stair wrote in his diary that day.

The couple moved into Stair Dick-Lauder's home in Ancaster, The Poplars, where they stayed until 1881. By this time, the rift with her family seems to have been healed, and Stair and Alma departed on a two-year trip to Scotland. She enjoyed herself very much, and her long letters home express her feelings about the lovely countryside, comparing it unfavourably to The Hermitage. A sense of class superiority is also frequently evident:

The church there is so old fashioned — all the county families have front pews in the gallery with the next row of pews for their servants — and I would like some of the Ancaster people, Mrs. Clark the baker for instance, to have seen the quantities of livery servants and maids and carriages at the church door. That is certainly half the charm of their side of the



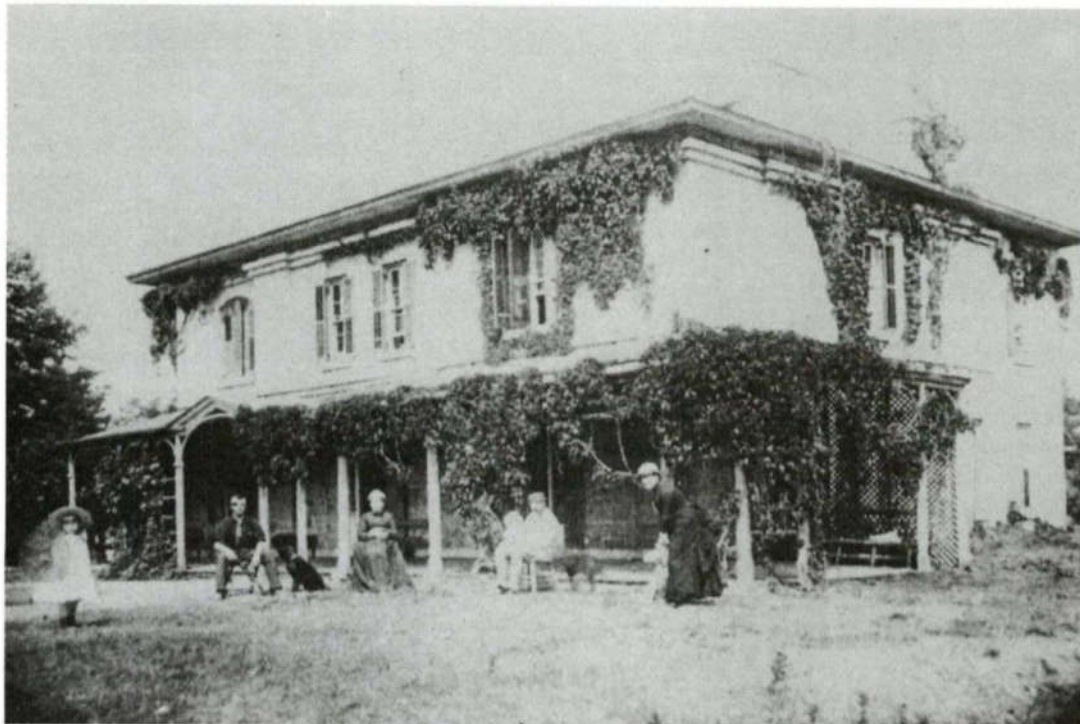
Alma Dick-Lauder, a formal pose, circa 1900.

world that everyone seems to be in their right place or at least to know it. (8 Feby. 1882)

Back in Ancaster, their home was renamed Fountainhall, in honour of Stair's ancestral home. The Canadian Fountainhall was of green clapboard, stood well back from the street, surrounded by lawns and a "Japanese" garden. There were two conservatories, two



Fountainhall, on the main street of Ancaster, looks remote and quiet in this photograph made almost a century ago.



Family members relax before The Hermitage on a summer day in 1888.

dogs — Mr. Purpy and Dabby — and a cage containing 49 canaries. In 1888, Stair moved to Toronto to become the Secretary of the Albany Club, coming home occasionally, but Alma always wished to remain in Ancaster. There may have been another rift with her family: her diaries for the next few years record feelings of isolation from family and friends, a continuing grief at her father's death, but also her love of being independent. Her impressions of Ancaster scenery and characters are deftly drawn:

I pity people without imagination. (As a rule in this part of the world they are all well endowed with that quality, but from want of walking exercise, it all runs to tongue)...(15 Jany. 1889)

The organist [at Saint John's Church] was only wound up to play one tune as usual and did it as badly as possible. I don't know what the tune is or if it ever had a name but it always sounds like a person walking with one shoe off and the other one on, to me, a sort of "dum-de-dum-de-dum-de-de." The dums are the boot and the de's are the stocking foot. Then there is a sort of scrimmage as if de-de had trodden on a tack and that is because she sees the parson with the tail of her eye coming forward to take the plates and wants to back off into Old Hundred which is comparatively smooth water. (20 Jany. 1889)

One morning when I was dressing I heard the door of

the striped room open and shut and the next thing I knew [a workman] appeared in the doorway of my room and asked where he could find a broom. I while directing him towards one in the old greenhouse, thought it well to remark en passant that I was dressed underneath and had on "this" to brush my hair in. Lou said "Oh that's all right — I've seen lots of women undressed"!!! It is charming to meet with unconventionality in this prosaic age, even in a fustian coat!!! (19 Dec. 1890)

Her favourite walks took her into the woods, fields and marshes belonging to neighbouring farmers. Winter and summer she went for walks with her dogs, commenting on everything from milkweed pods to partridges — "I forget what they call them in this country". Not only did these solitary walks allow her to describe the Dundas Valley in its various colours and aspects, but they gave her opportunities to express her loneliness:

When we crossed the meadow we climbed a rawboned looking new bit of fence and followed the path past Bevan's hay and straw stack into the wood where I have not been for many a long day, very russet brown now and silent save for one indignant squirrel who sat aloft and made a noise like a squeaky quill pen...I went through the wood and stood for a long time on a rock on the edge overlooking Forbes; "calm decay" everywhere — but so pretty — green for

the landscape supplied in the woods by cushions and footstools of the freshest moss and through the country amongst sere woods and bare lands by pine trees and fields of fall wheat...from the top a fine view of The Hermitage is to be had...it was a sad pleasure to look at the house and all the familiar trees and fields again and seemed for the moment impossible to believe the changes the years had brought...Just before leaving the hill a broad streak of sunlight broke out in the west and made a swath of beauty all down the valley, touching the faded woods and making them glow once more with warm rosy light. (30 Oct. 1890)

The American nature writers John Burroughs and William Hamilton Gibson influenced her feelings towards her surroundings. She read their books constantly, and one of her great delights was to find a view reminiscent of one of their descriptions. Although Fountainhall was located on the main street of Ancaster, local affairs concerned her very little:

I am sure that no one would believe me if I told them that I had kept a diary for a whole month especially leading the life I do in comparison of which the daily round of a monk of La Trappe would seem full and hilarious.

The only people that she sees with any regularity are

John Phillipo, the county constable, and his wife Mary. It was Phillipo who brought her the news of the murder of John Heslop, the Warden of Wentworth County, who lived at Woodend, only a short way west of The Hermitage. Mrs. Dick-Lauder recorded her impressions of this sensational crime, perhaps because her family had disliked the Heslops:

There was a big stone thrown into the pond of Ancaster's stagnation last week in the form of MURDER. Old John Heslop's house was broken into at two in the morning — cordwood stick against the back door (which shows that it is no use locking doors). He met the men at the head of the stairs and fought them with a chair which is all smashed so they shot him through the heart!!! Then searched the house and found a set of garnet jewellery and a trumpery ring and drove away! No clue to them as yet...Poor old Heslop is one of the first things I remember it seems to me — dating far back in the mists of the dim past — I suppose seeing him always driving to church with his little wizened up looking wife and daughter, like two old fossil pea hens — that impressed him on my mind. They were not an attractive looking trio by any means — three mean hard pinched looking faces as ever were seen, the daughter looking as old as the mother. They say he has left money behind. How badly those sort of people must feel when they wake up in another world



Victorian clutter catches the dust in the front hall of The Hermitage, after 1900.

and find they have had to leave it behind!...John Heslop had a very large funeral having been a sort of public man in this neighbourhood, something to do with the Town Council I think, and all Canadians love a funeral especially if there is a tragedy connected with it. I took a walk into Gabels field for the purpose of seeing it...I counted 140 traps of different sorts...There are several morals to be deduced from this shocking affair. One is when you go out to meet a burglar, take a six shooter instead of a chair and you will come off better...Another moral is don't lock your doors as they can always burst them in and it only gives them trouble and makes them angry and it is no use hearing them coming if you have no revolver. Also it proves that it is far better not to have a man in the house at all for if the pea hens had been alone no one would have been hurt. I don't know if some cranks wouldn't call me unwomanly but I should like — oh how I should like to shoot a burglar — either a male or female. I said that to a lady the other day and she agreed with me and pithily remarked "it would only be sending him to H--- a little sooner!!!!" (5 Feby. 1891)

The breath of scandal was never far from Mrs. Dick-Lauder, especially after her husband had moved to Toronto. Her name was linked to several men, one of them a local doctor. There may have been some truth to the gossip, for it is said that the Reverend Mr. Clark, of Saint John's Church, refused her the Sacrament when she was kneeling at the altar rail.

It is sometimes difficult to see if she is being complimentary or not:

"Men certainly were men in those days but I guess they didn't wash themselves as much as we would think requisite in these degenerate days and the men in that book always seemed to sleep in their clothes — might as well be in a perpetual sleeping car. (12 Jany. 1891)

In 1896, she wrote a series of historical articles for the *Hamilton Spectator*, under the title *Delving Among Ruins*. Eight of these articles, with a number by other local writers, were published in 1897 in book form as *Wentworth Landmarks*. She describes the Ancaster churches and their graveyards, and mills and houses which were falling into ruin. Farther afield, in Barton, she writes of the old Terryberry Inn and a "forgotten house of peace", the Hess burying ground. She states in her diary that she loves talking to old people about old times, and her interest in Ancaster's past is clear. Her descriptions are evocative, and while some of them are speculation, most of her historical facts are well researched and accurate.

In 1900, Mrs. George Leith died, predeceased by both her husband and her son Alexander. The Hermitage,

which had grown shabby and neglected-looking during the past decade, when it was occupied by Alexander and his family, was to be divided amongst the heirs. Alma purchased her sisters' shares and moved onto the estate the next year. She wrote of her many plans for the land — raising sheep and cattle, quarrying stone, selling timber — all of which would put her on a secure financial footing. Unfortunately, nothing worked very well and a niece, Mary Speiden, had to redeem the mortgage in 1917.

Many local people remember her peculiar way of life in her later years. There are stories of tea parties in the faded elegance of the drawing-room, where guests, cats and chickens partook of their meals together. On one occasion, Me Too, her prized Arabian horse, walked into the hall to accept a handful of sugar. On another, at a dinner party, a rooster, perched on the dining-room mantel, flew into the compote of pudding, which was served for dessert anyway.

The Hermitage mansion was completely destroyed by fire on 10 October 1934. Neighbours salvaged many of the fine furnishings, paintings and books, and for several weeks the octogenarian lived in a tent on the lawn. A small house was built for her inside the ruined stone walls, and here she lived until her death.

Alma Dick-Lauder died at The Hermitage on 27 February 1942. Her will provided for the future welfare of her pets and farm animals. Her wish was to be buried on the estate, under the oaks on the turn in the avenue, but she was interred instead in Saint John's Churchyard.

She had written:

When William Chambers, of Edinburgh, embalmed Dundas in his diary as a place to live and die in, he might have added Ancaster as a place in which to be buried, and doubtless he would have done so had he seen it...sometimes the site seems to have been selected on account of its flatness and aridity and complete absence of large shade trees, places which in the summer heat suggest vague thoughts of dried apples in a paper bag, and vain speculation in the frivolous mind, as to what dust an unwatered resurrection would raise. But...here, at Saint John's...surroundings appear which might well furnish a Canadian Gray with material for another elegy.

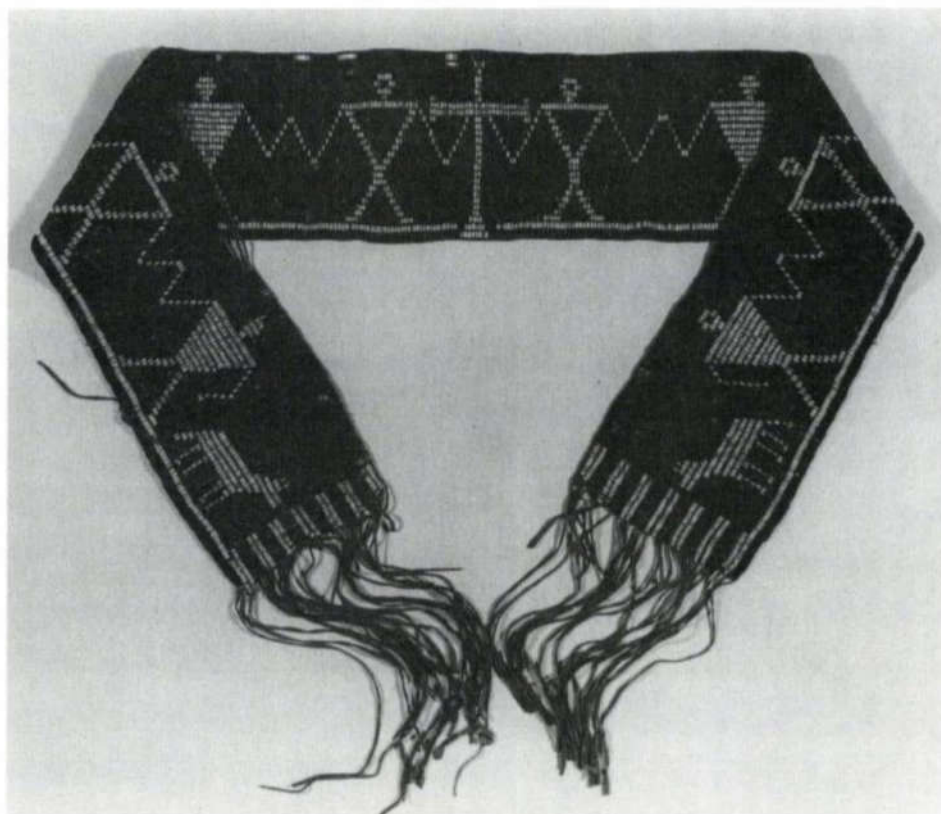
Alma Dick-Lauder was perhaps not that person, but it is difficult to think of turn-of-the-century Ancaster without her. ◆

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The Treaties of 1760

Mohawk pacts with the British
reverberate across two centuries

By John Thompson



A treaty of peace between the British Crown and the ancestors of certain natives of the present-day Province of Quebec was ratified on 30 August 1760, nine days before the British negotiated with the French for the take-over of New France. In September of that year a treaty of friendship was concluded between the Crown and the natives at Montreal. No official British records of these negotiations have yet been found; however, it is possible to piece together from scattered documents the story of these first treaties between nations.

In September 1759 the British army defeated the French troops at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham and captured the Citadel of Quebec. The French army retreated to Montreal for the winter, so that the loss of Quebec did not mean the end of French control of New

France — that would depend on whether French or English ships first reached the St. Lawrence the following spring — but there was great uncertainty about the future among the French and their native allies that fall.

Warriors from Kahnawake and Kanesatake (Oka) had fought on the French side during the five summers of war. Throughout that time they had received wampum belts carrying messages from the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations or Iroquois) to the south advising them to quit the country and join their brothers fighting for the British. In the fall of 1759 they received a belt from the man known as "Warraghiyagey," Sir William Johnson, 44, Superintendent of the Affairs of the Northern Indians for the British Crown. Its message read: "Keep out of the way when the English army approaches."

That winter a council of all the nations allied to



*Iroquois warrior, late eighteenth century.
Previous page: the "Two Dog wampum" presented to
Sir William Johnson. From the Notman Collection,
McCord Museum, Montreal.*

the French was held. Delegates "from Swegatchy [Ogdensburg, New York], Cagnawago, Conesadago, &ca" were sent to speak to the Council of the Haudenosaunee at Onondaga (New York). Chief Torongoa was their spokesman. "It would be hard Brothers for you to Expect We should leave them [the French] altogether, as We are taught by them to pray, and have the same expectations as the White People," he told the Council as he presented a large belt of wampum and proposed that they all remain out of the war in the coming summer and let the French and the English fight alone. "We shall be ruined to join One or the Other," he said, "while both bear hard upon Us, who are the Native Owners of the Land they fight about."

At this time General Jeffery Amherst, 44, Commander-in-chief of the British forces, was preparing for the final attack on New France. In late February he ordered Johnson to use his influence with the Indians who were friendly to the British to bring as many into the field as possible in the approaching summer. Amherst also wished to neutralize the threat posed by the native allies of France. ("Scoundrels," he had called these warriors following their scalping of several of his men a year

earlier.) The General ordered Johnson: "Exert Yourself to the utmost in bringing over to His Majesty's Interests all such, or as many as possible, of the Enemy Indians."

In early May the British fleet, not the French, arrived at Quebec. The fate of New France was sealed. That month a warrior from Kanasatake travelled to Fort Johnson (Johnstown, New York) with his wife and son and an English-speaking prisoner-of-war he wished to return to the British. There he met Sir William Johnson and told him the northern natives were "heartily tired of war". Johnson, acting on orders, extended a hand of friendship to the warrior from Kanasatake and his family and immediately informed the General of this intelligence.

That summer Amherst completed preparations for a three-pronged British attack on Montreal. One army under General Murray would move up the St. Lawrence from Quebec, another under Colonel Haviland would advance down Lake Champlain, while a third, led by Amherst, would assemble at Oswego (New York) and travel down the St. Lawrence to Montreal. Hundreds of native warriors from 16 different nations joined this army at Oswego in late July. Johnson, who led them, wrote: "I was able to proceed from Oswego with upwards of 600 Warriors, but as there were nine Severall Nats. & Tribes of Inds. inhabiting ye Country about Montreal consisting of above 800 fighting men, previous to our departure I judged it highly necessary to gain them if possible, at least to bring them to a neutrality, being very sensible of the difficultys which an Army had to encounter in their way to Montreal where a few Indians Joined with other troops might act to great advantage. I therefore proposed to Genl. Amherst the sending them offers of peace & protection which he agreed to."

The nine nations of Canada (from south to north) were known to the Haudenosaunee, according to Johnson's lists, as:

1. Swegatchies, "chiefly Onondagas" of Oswegatchie.
2. Cahnawagas near Montreal with "a few at Aghquissasne".
3. Canasadagas of Lac des Deux Montagnes (Oka).
4. Algonkins of Lac des Deux Montagnes (summer).
5. Arundacs (Nipissings) of Lac des Deux Montagnes (summer).
6. Abenakis of St. Francois.
7. Skoghquanoghroonas of Trois Rivières.
8. Wanats or Hurons near Quebec.
9. Korkagoghroonok, "wandering Indians," called by the French Têtes de Boule.

THE TREATY AT OSWEGATCHIE

Belts of peace were sent to all the nations except the Swegatchies who had already left the French and had joined the British in late June. One belt was received by

the chiefs at Kanesatake. "We immediately called a Council," recalled Chief Aughneeta later, "and determined to accept the protection held out to us. Accordingly the chief men of our village as well as those of other villages, attended Sir William at Oswegatchie."

On 28 August, three days after the capture of the French post of Fort Levis, near Oswegatchie, General Amherst noted in his journal, "Sr Wm Johnson acquainted me at night of three Indians were come up with a message from about thirty who were coming up to joyn us." The next day he noted: "At night Capt. Jacobs who was taken [prisoner] with Capt. Kennedy came to me. He arrived with Indians from the French & brought me a Letter from a Priest to offer Peace on the Indian side." The following day the General sent a translation of the letter to Johnson noting: "You will be best able to Judge what will be the most likely means to hinder the Indians from Joining the Enemy, in which case they may be Assured of being permitted to Live in Peace and Quiet, and of receiving all the protection they can desire."

On 30 August 1760 Amherst noted in his journal, "Sr. Wm Johnson all day in conference with Indians." Johnson generally kept careful records of his diplomatic dealings with the natives; however, no record of this meeting has been found. Later he noted: "On our arrival at Fort Levi, deputies came from the before mentioned

Nations on my Message to them from Oswego, who there ratified a Treaty with us, whereby they agreed to remain neuter on condition that we for the future treated them as friends & forgot all former enmity."

Chief Aughneeta stated that the delegates from Kanesatake presented their title deed to their lands, the Two-Dog Wampum Belt, to Johnson at Oswegatchie: "He received the submission of all the Deputies from Canada and there in full council granted us protection in the King's Name and confirmed to us our Lands and the free exercise of our religion...in confirmation of which he delivered back to us the Belt." (See page 23).

"The Peace which I settled with the 9 Nations before mentioned, was productive of such good consequences," Johnson wrote, "that some of these Indians [15 Swegatchie warriors] joined us, & went upon Partys for Prisoners &ca whilst the rest preserved so strict a neutrality that we passed all the dangerous Rapids, and the whole way without the least opposition."

THE TREATY AT LONGUEUIL

On 5 September Amherst's force encamped below the rapids at Ile-Perrot ready to march the next day to Montreal. All but 182 of the natives under Johnson's command had left the British at Oswegatchie and had returned home. Their former enemies, the warriors of



Montreal from St. Helen's Island, late eighteenth century, by Thomas Davies.

National Gallery of Canada



Sir William Johnson

Kanesatake and Kahnawake remained in their villages and offered no resistance.

On the same day the other two British armies under Murray and Haviland waited below the Lachine Rapids. The Huron warriors and others who lived downriver, having withdrawn from the war, were trapped. That day at Longueuil a British officer, Captain John Knox, noted, "eight Sachems [chiefs] of different nations, lately in alliance with the enemy, have surrendered, for themselves and their tribes, to General Murray."

Acting under Amherst's orders to bring over the enemy Indians, Murray accepted the natives' offer to withdraw from the upcoming struggle. He provided their spokesman with a document which read:

These are to certify that the Chief of the Huron Tribe of Indians, having come to me in the name of his Nation to submit to His Britannick Majesty and to make peace, has been allowed under my protection with his whole tribe, and henceforth no English Officer or party is to molest or interrupt them in returning to their settlement at Lorette and they are received upon the same terms with the Canadians, being allowed the free Exercise of their religion, their Customs and liberty of trading with the English Garrisons recommending it to the Officers commanding the posts to treat them kindly. (*Note: In 1990 the Supreme Court of Canada judged this document to be a treaty.*)

"While these Chieftans were negotiating a peace, two of our Mohawks entered the apartment where they were," wrote Knox. They warned the former French allies that Mohawks had not yet been avenged. "Do you remember, when you treacherously killed one of our brothers?...Ye shall one day pay dearly for it, ye cowardly

dogs — let the treaty be as it will." The General intervened, according to Knox, and "put the Mohawks out of the room, and laid both parties under the strongest injunctions not to molest each other, on pain of being most severely chastised by the Commander in Chief."

Following the meeting, noted Knox, the chiefs "stepped out to the beach opposite to Montreal, flourished their knives and hatchets, and set up the war-shout; intimating to the French, that they are now become our allies and their enemies."

ARTICLE 40

On 8 September Governor Vaudreuil of New France, surrounded by an overwhelming number of British troops, was forced to surrender. Article 40 of the Articles of Capitulation which he sent to Amherst that day read:

The Indian allies of His Most Christian Majesty [Louis XV], shall be maintained in possession of the lands they occupy if they wish to remain thereon; they shall not be molested under any pretext whatsoever for having taken up arms and served His Most Christian Majesty, they will have like the French, liberty of religion and will keep their missionaries.

To this Amherst gave his approval. At the same time, the General refused the French the honours of war and demanded that they deliver up their colours to him because of "barbaritys and crueltys" committed by their Indian allies. (The French denied responsibility and did not surrender their colours, claiming "they were quite torn and they had destroyed them.")

That night Amherst wrote to William Pitt and enclosed a copy of the Articles of Capitulation. "Sir Wm Johnson has taken unwearied pains in keeping the Indians in human bounds," he added, "& I have the pleasure to assure you that not a peasant Woman or Child has been hurt by them or a house burnt, since I enter'd what was the Enemy's country."

"THE TREATY HELD AT CAGHNAWAGEY"

Johnson, meanwhile, had been ordered to arrange for the release of all British prisoners held by the natives. On Monday, 15 September, he and the warriors who had accompanied him downriver were present at what he later called "the Treaty held at Caghnawagey". Again, no record of Johnson's words has yet been found; however, the minutes of the Indians' reply made the following day, as recorded by his assistant, Daniel Claus, have survived.

First, the "Representatives of 8 Nations" (the Swegatchies had left the alliance) welcomed "Brother Warraghiyagey," as they called Johnson, and thanked him for the belt of peace which he had sent them from Oswego. With a string of wampum they gave thanks to the Creator

for allowing them to meet in so friendly a manner.

They then turned to the warriors who had accompanied the British from Oswegatchie: "Your coming along was very necessary and of mutual Service," they told them and presented a wampum belt.

Turning again to Johnson they responded to his offer made the previous day to renew and strengthen "the old Covenant Chain," as the British called their system of alliance with native nations. "We will hold fast the Same, for ever hereafter," the Chiefs asserted. They thanked him for allowing them to travel freely to Albany, and promised to deliver up their British prisoners, as he had requested, as soon as possible. This they recorded with a belt.

With a separate belt they declared: "We...will bury the french hatchet we have made Use of, in the bottomless Pit, never to be Seen more by us or our Posterity."

The chiefs next addressed their brothers of the Confederacy of the Five Nations (Haudenosaunee) who had presented them with a belt the previous day desiring them to reunite and be Friends. "We with pleasure agree," they told them.

They next returned the string presented by Johnson by which he requested that representatives of their nations travel to Albany with him on his journey home, and they told him they were ready when he was.

"Having now made a firm Peace with the Engsh. and ye 6 Nats., we shall endeavour all in our Powr. to keep it inviolably," they stated, then, presenting a large belt, they began to make their requests. They asked that liquor not be sold to them by the British. With another belt they asked the Haudenosaunee not to bring liquor into their country and, with a black belt, they requested that Johnson prohibit the sale of liquor to their young men at distant military posts.

They informed Johnson that the French provided gunsmiths to work for them without charge and had supported their priests. "We beg you will not be worse than our former Friends." They also asked him to set prices for trade goods so that they would not be cheated by British traders, and presented him with another belt.

Then Ad'yadarony, the War Chief of Kahnawake arose and asked Johnson to ignore any rash or foolish statements that might be made to British officials by young warriors. He presented Brother Warraghiyagey

with a warrior's belt.

"We are now linked together in the Chain of Friendship," Ad'yadarony concluded, and, with a string of wampum, requested that their former French interpreter be replaced by someone who could speak English.

Finally, the chiefs concluded by presenting Johnson with a large black belt. "As we have according to your Desire kept out of the Way of your Army, You will allow us the Peaceable Possession of ye Spot of Ground we live now upon, and in case we should remove from it, to reserve to us as our own." Here the minutes of the meeting end. No record of Johnson's response has yet been found.

THE COUNCIL AT MONTREAL

On the same day as this meeting, General Amherst replied to a letter sent him by the missionary of the Abenakis of St. Francois who was at Kahnawake at the time. "As to what you seem to fear from some of the Abenakis, I am not surprised," he wrote. "I am more than persuaded that their attachment for the English proceeds only from the fact that they fear their superior force; but no matter what the reason, so long as they behave as they should, they will not be disturbed; if they free themselves and depart from their duty I shall know how to punish them."

The chiefs of the nations living at Lac des Deux Montagnes, having promised at the meeting to return their British prisoners, informed Johnson that a number of captives were being held in their villages. Four days later Amherst wrote Johnson: "I Send An Officer with a party to take Boats to Gunnesadago for our Prisoners; he has at the Same time a Letter for the Priest as you desired."

On 22 September 1760, the day after the French Governor had sailed away from Montreal, the chiefs of most of the 9 Nations of Canada assembled at the Governor's House in Montreal to formally return the subjects of the King they held as prisoners. General Amherst now sat in the French Governor's place. For the occasion Johnson had requisitioned supplies from British military stores to present to the chiefs (although he had been unsuccessful in obtaining the customary gift of ammunition). "The Gun Powder which you mention to give to the Indians," wrote Amherst, "shall be furnished to them from the Nearest Posts to them...they can't want any in going, as they will receive Provisions on their



View of the village of Oka, late eighteenth century, by an unknown artist. From the Archives du Séminaire de Québec, Québec.

Route, and the less Ammunition they have, the more regular they will be.”)

Both Amherst and Johnson were present at this Council, but no record of the proceedings has yet been discovered. All the General wrote in his journal that evening was: “I went into town to Mons Vaudreuil’s house as I had delivered to Sr. Wm Johnson as many things for the Indians out of stores as he thought necessary, and [to see] that everything was settled with the French Indians who delivered up all the prisoners.”

On 4 October Amherst wrote to William Pitt reporting the events that had occurred since leaving Oswegatchie. He made only brief mention of British dealings with the natives: “I gave our Indians as a reward for their behaviour as many necessities & trinkets out of stores, as Sir Wm. thought necessary and ordered them home,” he reported. “Sir Wm. visited the Indian nations settled here, to regulate and put everything in a proper channel for them during the winter. A number of Prisoners, Men, women & children brought in from the country whch. I sent home to the Provinces.” Amherst enclosed 57 documents in the appendix to his official report; these did not include a record of Johnson’s negotiations with the natives.

On 24 October, after returning home, Johnson also wrote to Pitt. As previously noted, he stated that he had made a treaty at Oswegatchie, but he did not include any of the particulars.

AFTERWARD

Five months later, Daniel Claus, Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Montreal wrote Johnson: “Gen. Gage [Military Governor of Montreal] is an entire stranger to the Transactions and Engagements the Inds. of Canada have entered into with you last fall, and I think if he had a copy shewed him he might perhaps be not so strict with them but treat them more friendlike, besides I want a copy of sd. proceedings to remind the Indians here of what was transacted, and if any foreigners come to acquaint them of the Mutual Engagements entered into.”

The natives needed no reminders. “The Caghnawageys and Caneghsadageys have lately been with me,” Claus reported two weeks later, “and renewed their Engagements entered into last fall...They therefore had firmly and unanimously resolved in a public council that let time and Events be as they would, they never again would take up the Hatchet against the English but would steadily mind their hunting. I also had the Chief of the Nipisins with me whom I reminded as near as I could what was transacted last fall and desired him to see every English Pris’ left among his people be delivered up.”

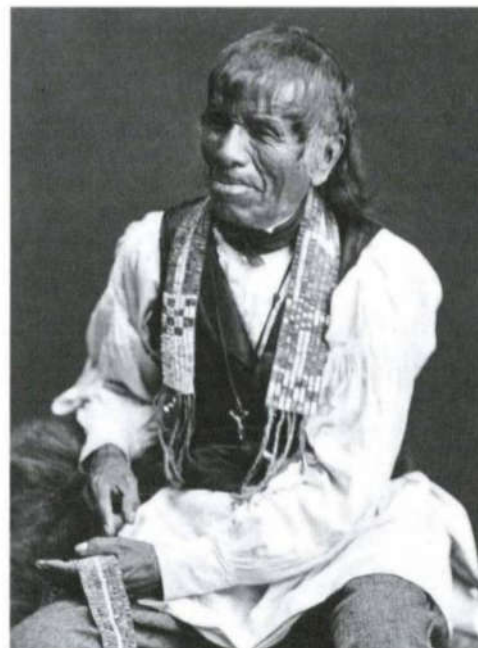
There is no evidence that Johnson sent his deputy a copy of the proceedings of the “Treaty of Friendship”, as Claus later called it. Instead, in his reply, Johnson wrote

of Amherst: “Inter nos, he is not at all a friend of the Indians w^h. I am afraid may have bad consequences one time or other, especially so, if ever that country [New France] be given back.” In a later letter he was more blunt. “The General,” he confided, “is too indifferent about, & severe to all Indians.”

Seven months later, after negotiating a treaty at Detroit with other former allies of France, Johnson received the following advice from Amherst: “With regard to publishing your Proceedings I should Imagine, that as I shall transmit Copies to His Majesty’s Ministers, who will of Course, Communicate the Contents of them to those to whom they should be made known, & make publick such part thereof as as may be Judged proper, it will be better to Leave that Entirely to the Ministry; whose province it is to publish, by proper authority, the Transactions of the King’s Servants, in the Several Departments of His Majesty’s Dominions.”

No complete copy of the proceedings of 1760 has yet been found among Johnson’s papers or in official British public records. For 230 years the treaties of peace and friendship were forgotten in Canadian history, until, in 1990, the Supreme Court of Canada, determined that the document of 5 September 1760 signed by General Murray constituted a treaty between the Crown and the Hurons. It remains for the descendants of the former French allies to assert the legal validity of the minutes of the Indian Conference of 16 September 1760, recorded when nations met and nations agreed. ♦

Historian John Thompson lives at Low, Quebec.



*Mohawk chief, photographed in 1870
with wampum.*

Notman Collection, McCord Museum

The Beast of War



Printed by War Prisoners' Aid, Y.M.C.A.

and the Beautiful Lake

On Valentine's day in 1941 a convoy of German war ships and troop carriers steamed toward Tripoli. On the deck of the leading ship, a young soldier named Lance Corporal Hans Seefeld took out his diary and wrote a description of the tall palms and sun-baked white buildings along the African coast. Upon landing in Tripoli, Seefeld and the other Germans marched into the desert and met their Italian allies, who seemed "as happy as little children" to see him and his comrades. Arriving at their camp in the Sahara Desert the Germans pitched their tents, then relaxed in the sun drinking coffee and eating mandarin oranges. "In the evening it is always pleasantly cool," Seefeld wrote. "Pitch dark tropical night covered with 1,000 stars. A novel by Karl May could not be more intriguing."

Seefeld was a member of General Erwin Rommel's soon-to-be-famous Afrika Corps, and his enemies were the "Tommies" under the command of Field Marshal Bernard Law Montgomery. Seefeld's sense of the war as a romantic adventure began to fade, however, as the weather began to heat up. "Forty degrees Celsius," he wrote in his diary, "a severe sandstorm erupts. It is almost unbearable. Everything is congested with sand. Sand, sand sand, and sand again! We are lying in our

tents and can hardly breathe because of the heat."

The war began to heat up too. The Germans were bombarded day and night by British artillery and aircraft. Seefeld was a motorcycle dispatch rider — a hair-raising job — and he often found himself careering down desert highways with shells exploding all around him. Occasionally he provided bodyguard services for the legendary Rommel himself, driving behind Rommel's staff car in a captured white American pickup with a heavy machine-gun mounted in the back. "My beautiful Ford," Seefeld called it. The only disadvantage to the Ford was an obvious one — when he ran a message, both sides shot at him. At one point a shell hit a British caravan and Seefeld, with his pistol, captured seven survivors. "I must say, the Tommies are great guys and tough soldiers," he wrote. "You have to respect them."

After Tobruk, the British gained the upper hand and the Germans were reduced to fighting defensively, huddled miserably under the brutal sun. Rats and lice infested their bunkers and frequently they were reduced to eating coffee grounds and tea leaves, with only a cup of water per day to postpone death from dehydration. Finally Seefeld was captured and lodged with thousands of other Germans in a POW camp. They were shipped to Durban, then on to North America via the steamer

German prisoners in cottage country

By Jake MacDonald

Mauretania. On board the ship, the Germans were guarded by trigger-happy Polish soldiers, whom Seefeld found to be "cruel and cunning. The Tommies are much fairer and more chummy."

At Newport News, Virginia, the Germans were unloaded under the watchful eyes of heavily-armed American police and military. "The Yankees stare at us in an awesome manner," he wrote. "They think we are characters from a fairy tale. Nice, smartly dressed American ladies are looking at us full of pity."

After rolling up the eastern seaboard, through Washington, New York and Buffalo, the POW train entered Canada and headed west, through Hamilton, Port Arthur and Winnipeg. Throughout the journey, Seefeld was thrilled by the magnificent panorama outside his window. "I never dared to expect that my childhood dreams would become reality," he recorded. "to observe Indians and grizzly bears in unspoiled nature."



German prisoners of war pose for a group portrait outside their barracks.

In Ozada, Alberta, the Germans were finally installed in a huge prison camp that already contained 12,000 POWs. Some of the POWs in Alberta were doctrinaire Nazis, and conflict immediately arose between these hard-core prisoners and battle-weary soldiers of the regular services. The Nazis spied on new prisoners, held kangaroo courts, and even lynched one POW for spreading anti-war propaganda. In an effort to forestall further trouble, the Canadian military authorities weeded out the Nazi agitators and sent them to a special prison at Neys, on the north shore of Lake Superior. Ordinary German servicemen like Hans Seefeld were informed that, if they chose, they could go on to small bush camps and work as lumberjacks. Thousands of POWs chose this option. Servicemen from the Luftwaffe, the Wehrmacht, and other German formations climbed back onto passenger trains and headed east, to logging camps scattered across Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario.

In Riding Mountain National Park in Manitoba, the Department of National Defence maintained a 150-man POW camp at Whitewater Lake. To the north, the Cache Lake camp in the Duck Mountains held another 150 prisoners. Each camp consisted of two cabins for Civilian

Guards, six barracks for prisoners, a barn for horses, an administrative office and a small hospital. Each prisoner was expected to cut one-half a cord of wood per day, for which they were paid 50 cents. The POWs were generally strong young men and had no trouble filling that requirement, and often they sought other jobs in the locale — working part-time for local farmers or cutting hydro lines through the bush. "Some of the POWs particularly enjoyed fighting forest fires," recalled a prison warden named David Binkley. "They'd work any hours. Day or night. They wanted to stay out and finish the job."

East of Winnipeg, there were six POW camps on Lake of the Woods. One train loaded with POWs arrived in Kenora near the Manitoba-Ontario border on a balmy April day. The POWs were received by Canadian soldiers called "Veterans' Guards", most of whom were vets from Winnipeg, well past the age of regular military service. A prisoner named Hans Kaiser recalls that the guards were "old guys from World War I, over 50 years old. They were really easy-going guys, very friendly."

After taking charge, the guards marched the Germans across the still-frozen ice of Lake of the Woods to the various POW camps — most of which were picturesque hamlets of rustic cabins on the shore of the lake where many Canadians had summer cottages. Johannes Lieberwirth, like Hans Seefeld, was a member of the Afrika Korps, and was captured after the fall of Tobruk. Upon arriving at Camp 60 on Lake of the Woods, Lieberwirth was "fascinated by the forest, the lake, and the excellent food." As soon as he arrived he went to work cutting wood in the forest, and discovered that the area was well-populated with wild animals: deer, foxes, and to add excitement — bears. "There were many of these black fellows roaring around," Lieberwirth recalled. "They didn't attack us but were very keen on the contents of our lunch boxes. Sometimes a moose in thick underbrush was goggling at me. And those many porcupines, such jolly animals with their needle coats!"

Like the POWs in Riding Mountain, the prisoners on Lake of the Woods were paid 50 cents per day to cut wood. With their money they bought cigarettes, fishing tackle, chocolate bars, apples and other treats from the camp canteen. Many of the prisoners whiled away their nights building detailed model ships and full-size canoes. One prisoner melted down fishing sinkers and recast them as Iron Crosses, offering them on consignment to one of the guards who in turn sold them as "authentic war souvenirs" to gullible cottage people for \$15 each. Other POWs pursued some of the excellent ice fishing to be had right around the camp. "We were allowed to go off by ourselves, as long as we didn't go more than a mile from camp," said one prisoner. "But the guards didn't pay much attention."

On one occasion a group of POWs went to Kenora for dental care, accompanied by a guard. The guard proceeded to visit a local bar and drink himself into unconsciousness. As one POW remembers it, "the

POWs had to pull the guard back to camp on a toboggan. One of the fellows was carrying the guard's rifle so that it wouldn't get slush on it. But when they got close to camp, he realized that he'd better lay the rifle on the toboggan."

During the long, leisurely days of summer, the prisoners built kayaks and diving floats, and staged regattas and diving competitions. In the evenings, the crew boss (who was usually a local logging contractor) would sometimes invite some of his favorite prisoners to join him for a little sip of "white lightning", brewed up someplace far away from the prying eyes of military authorities.

In Hans Seefeld's camp, the POWs sometimes borrowed firearms from the guards so that they could go hunting for ducks and deer. A smokehouse preserved the delicious wild game for the long winter nights ahead. The Red Cross visited the camps regularly and provided the prisoners with mail from home, books, movies, and musical instruments. (Many of the camps had semi-

Kaiser and his wife moved back to the Lake of the Woods and settled permanently. "That wasn't my war," he says. "I was just a sailor and suddenly there I was, fighting against the rest of the world. I have so many friends in Kenora and not one of them thinks I was a Jew-killer. I am a peaceful man. If everyone was like me, the world would be a safe place."

Kaiser was one of several thousand Germans whose POW experience in Canada forever changed their lives. A U-boat commander named Siegfried Bruse moved back to Canada and became a successful realtor in North Bay. His choice wasn't based entirely on economic opportunity. "I like Canadians. They made my life as pleasant as possible from the day I came here as a prisoner."

Hans Seefeld also returned to Germany, got married, and spirited his new bride back to the Ontario bush country. He and his wife Margot built a fishing lodge called Black Bear Portage on Roughrock Lake north of Kenora. They raised a family and successfully operated their tourist business for many years after the war. Seefeld's widow

The bush camp near Kenora, Ontario, toward the end of the war.



professional orchestras to provide entertainment on Christmas and other holidays.) "It was paradise," says Hans Kaiser. "Except for one thing — no girls."

In many camps, the POWs donned uniforms and conducted a ceremony on the night of Hitler's birthday. But as the winters and summers passed, the POWs began to lose their sense of identification with the German war effort. "After D-Day, we knew it was over," says Hans Kaiser. "We didn't care anyway. When you think of the mess Hitler made of the whole thing, you just shake your head."

Kaiser was shipped back to Germany in 1946. But something was missing. Although he lived in what he calls "the nice part of Germany," he felt that there was no comparison to Canada. "No lake, no water, no nothing." He found a wife, and told his bride about this fabulous place he wanted to take her — Kenora, Ontario.

(he died in 1992) says that he loved the wilderness, and was very impressed by the humane way that he was treated as a POW. "Hans always said the same thing," chuckles Margot Seefeld. "He said that being a prisoner was the happiest time of his life." ♦

Jake MacDonald is a Winnipeg writer who has published several volumes of short stories. His journalism has appeared in magazines across Canada.

WHEN THE MOVIES CAME TO CANADA

'LIVING PICTURES'

By Peter Steven

It is an old saying in the movie business: "What we need is something just the same, and completely different. Give me a Clint Eastwood adventure set in Newfoundland, or let's cross Meryl Streep and a drama with dinosaurs."

Maybe it was the same right at the beginning when on 31 August 1896 the first audiences for "living pictures" lined up in Toronto outside Robinson's Musée Theatre at 91 Yonge Street for Edison's Vitascope. Patrons may have wondered, "Will these moving pictures be just like the Magic Lantern or Kinetoscope peep-shows? Will they be more scientifically profound than Professor Röntgen's "Mysterious X-Rays", also on view at Robinson's? Are they yet another incredible invention from the wondrous brain of Edison, comparable to the phonograph or the electric bulb?"

In the next day's review for the *Toronto World* an anonymous writer reported amazement:

The X-Rays ... [have] a decided scientific interest, but in Edison's latest wonder, the vitascope, there is the scientific combined with the amusing. This machine projects apparently living figures and scenes on a canvas screen before the audience. It baffles analysis, and because of its wonderful simulation of human beings in action delights immense audiences.

Two weeks later the *Toronto Evening Star*, in its regular "At the Theatres" column, thought the living pictures worthy of a recommendation:

The crowds who visited the Musée are not being disappointed at the bill of fare provided for them. Down in the theatre the vitascope with its life-like views still continues to draw large crowds who go away puzzling themselves as to how it is done.

On 1 September, just one day after the Musée premiere, Toronto's Industrial Exhibition opened for its eighteenth season featuring Edison's competition, the Lumière Cinématographe, with films direct from Paris and London. The *Evening Star*, which garbled the French, referred to it as "Lunniere's machine" and mentioned that "the cinematographe and the electric scenic theatre [buildings], which a day or two ago looked to be far from completion, were finished and fully equipped." These were sideshow structures strung in ramshackle fashion between the opulent Crystal Palace and the Grandstand, the first attractions of a new area called La Plaisance or The Midway.

Who were those first Toronto viewers of the movies? And how did they perceive what they were seeing? Did readers believe the hype in the *Evening Star* ads calling living pictures "The Wonder of the Century" and "the Greatest and Best Novel Feature at the Industrial Fair"?

The films shown at the Musée and the Exhibition each lit the canvas screen for less than a minute. They were all single shots, with no editing either in-camera or afterwards. The programme at the Musée included only four films, all produced by the Edison Company: *The Black Diamond Express*; *Shooting the Chutes at Coney Island*; *La Loie Fuller's Serpentine Dance*, featuring colour tinting; and *The Kiss*, starring Canadian theatre star May Irwin in a climactic scene from her Broadway hit *The Widow Jones*. For the Exhibition, records of the exact Lumière programme no longer exist but viewers likely saw *Workers Leaving Lumière Factory*, *The Falling Wall*, *A Game of Cards*, *Debarcation of Photographic Congress Members at Lyon*, *Feeding The Baby*, plus the famous *Train Arriving At La Ciotat Station* and *The Gardener Watered*. These were supplemented for Canadian audiences with *The Derby* and *The Henley Regatta* by the English filmmaker Robert Paul.

In most cases the films contained only a single action. Thus plot, dialogue, and explanatory inter-titles were unnecessary. There were no breaks in time or

space, no cuts to compress or lengthen time, and there was no cutting from one scene or location to another. Many of the first Edison films recorded highlights from stage acts, shot in a specially constructed outdoor studio in East Orange, New Jersey. *The Kiss*, shot in April 1896 and Edison's most popular film to date, was certainly remarkable as it was filmed in medium close-up, thus cutting the actors at the waist. This type of composition indicates the influence of still photography, and even painting, rather than the theatre. Within a few months, however, such use of the close-up in filming people would be banished from the movies, until its return around 1908.

The Lumière films showed much greater mobility than the early Edisons. They were photographed on location, first around Paris, then within months all around the world. Though they looked natural and spontaneous, and some have called them primitive home-movies, they reveal considerable precision in their recording of action and events. The short film *Falling Wall* shows that the cinematographer has taken great care in composing the workmen and the wall; the camera gets rolling just as the action starts and ends just after the wall comes down. The timing is precise, and one complete action is recorded, no more, no less. This organized spontaneity characterizes most of the Lumière films. They easily qualify as the first documentaries.

The justly famous *The Gardener Watered* contains the first fragments of narrative, and of comedy, giving us suspense, as a boy sneaks behind the gardener and steps on the hose; action, as the gardener gets splashed in the face, and reaction, as the gardener catches and lightly spansks the boy. All the shenanigans unfold in one shot, with the camera held rock steady.

These "living pictures" were certainly short and flickering, yet they were also rich in associations from current events, from the stage, and other screen entertainments. A *Toronto Mail and Empire* reporter tried valiantly on 19 September to solve the "just the same/completely different" conundrum:

One of the prettiest and most realistic scenes in the Vitascope exhibition at Robinson's Musée is a reproduction of a serpentine dance, "*A La Loie Fuller*". The representation of the dance seems as perfect as if the dancer were actually before the audience. The changing lights in the draperies are also reproduced in all their vividness and variety.

During that same September both Loie and Ida Fuller appeared in the flesh at the Grand Opera House.

Only nine months earlier in Paris, on 28 December 1895, the first public large-screen showings of movies

*From the "Toronto World",
29 August 1896.*

AMUSEMENTS.

Opens NEXT **Tuesday,** **Sept. 1,** CANADA'S GREAT **EXPOSITION**

...AND..

Industrial Fair, **TORONTO,**

and continues 10 days
Greatest and Best of All.
Every Building will be filled to
its utmost capacity.

Attractions Better Than Ever.
First Fireworks—Wednesday Next.
First Special Excursion—Sept 3rd.
Come early and enjoy the Exhibition
in comfort.

John J. Withrow,
President.

H. J. Hill,
Manager and Sec.

ROBINSON'S MUSEE THEATRE

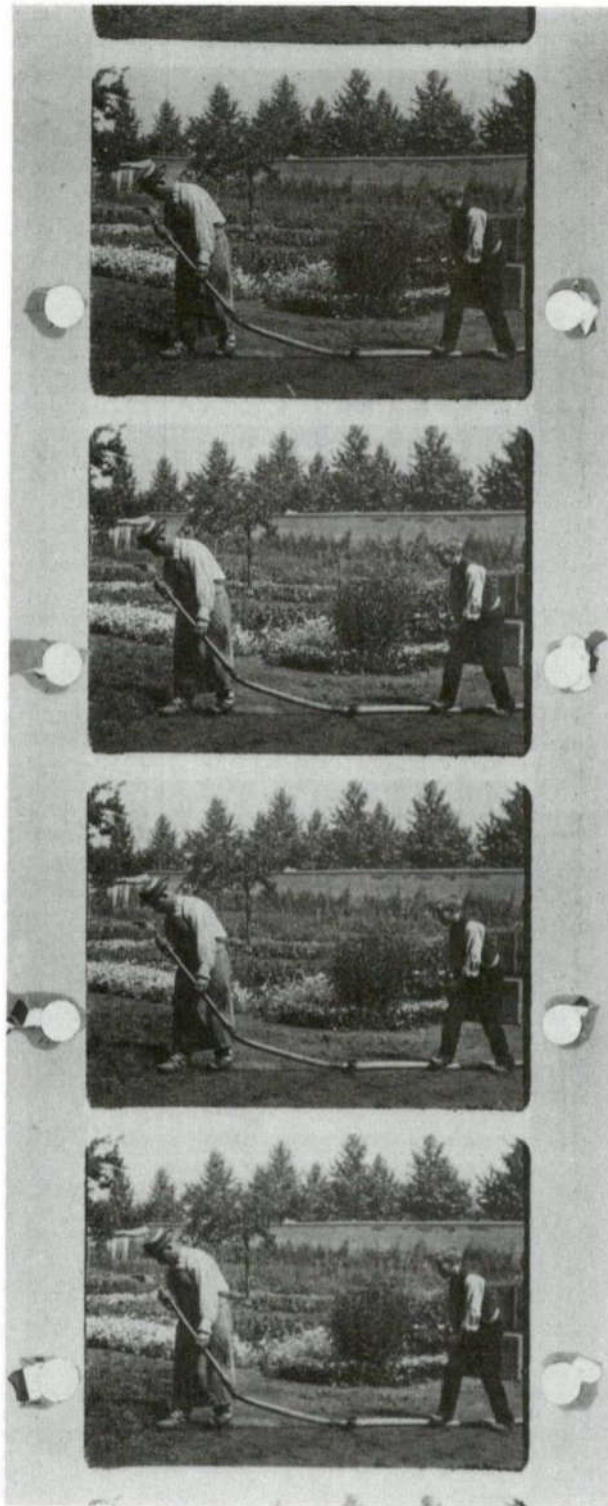
Grand reopening Monday afternoon, Aug.
31st. New management, new ideas, nothing
cheap except prices. First time in
Toronto—

EDISON'S WONDERFUL VITASCOPE.

First Time in Toronto—

PROF. ROENTGEN'S GREAT X RAYS.

First time in Toronto—The Hearon's
Lady Orchestra. Grand combination
features—Theatre, Eden Musée, Art
Gallery, Music Hall, Roof Garden,
Promenade Concert and Menagerie.
Mr. and Mrs. Houghton, Mr. Allen May,
Mamie Bland, Eleanor Garvini, Loring and
Leslie, and a host of bright people. Per-
formances every afternoon and evening.
Come at any time and stay as long as you
please—General Admission 10 cents; thea-
tre balcony free; reserved seats, first floor,
10 and 15 cents. During Fair week spe-
cial performances of the Vitascope fore-
noons, 10 to 12 o'clock, after Monday.



Lumière's "L'Arroseur arrosé" or "The Gardener Watered", 1896. Note the single sprocket holes.

were presented by the Lumière manufacturing family: Louis, Auguste, and their father Antoine. (In fact a few showings predate this — by Max Skladanowsky in Berlin; by Grey and Otway Latham, using their Eidoloscope machine, in New York and Chicago; and by the Lumières themselves in a kind of publicity warm-up for the French scientific community. But the December 1895 show in Paris was the first *successful* commercial showing.) Within a few months the phenomenon had vaulted with extraordinary speed across Europe and into North America. Almost simultaneously Edison, along with his agents and patent lawyers, aggressively launched the Vitascope into nasty competition with the Lumière machine, first showing on 23 April 1896 at Koster and Bial's Music Hall Theatre in New York.

These first two years of wonderful anarchy saw an outpouring of camera and projection machines with amazing and bewildering names: the phantoscope, the vidiscope, the zooscope, the amet magniscope, the animatographe, the panoramographe, the kalatechnoscope, the biograph, the kineoptikon, the mutograph and Quebec's favourite, the historiographe. Many were completely incompatible, with variations in film width, sprocket holes, and mechanisms for dealing with flicker. The Lumière machine, for instance, used only one round sprocket hole on each side of the celluloid frame, unlike the double row of four rectangles that would become the industry standard. It was one hundred times lighter than the bulky Edison device and more versatile too. It could record and develop, as well as project film and it was hand cranked rather than electrically powered — one reason why the portable Lumière Cinématographe was chosen for the temporary site of the Toronto Exhibition and favoured by travelling showmen. During the first years that the Edison projector was in use complaints came in from regional exhibitors, including licensees in the Maritimes, that the electrical requirements prohibited shows in many small theatres. Thus in the beginning small was beautiful.

Canada's first showing of "living pictures" took place in Montreal's Theatre Palace, 78 rue St. Laurent, on 27 June 1896, presented by Louis Minier and his assistant Louis Pupier, using the Cinématographe and the Lumière programme of films. A month later, on 21 July, the Edison Vitascope and four Edison films premiered on the edge of Ottawa in a stage and tent setup for visitors to West End Park, a new suburb linked by the Electric Railway. Toronto show business promoters must have been amazed to learn that they weren't first.

English-Canadian historians were surprised to learn this too when, in 1985, Quebec film scholar Germain Lacasse, criticizing the "amnesia" and "laziness" of other historians, revealed that the Montreal show predated those in Ottawa and Toronto. And he proved it by exhibiting a front page review of the event from the newspaper *La Presse*. Prior to Lacasse setting the record

straight the Ottawa showing had usually been considered the country's first.

The year 1896 marks the start of a new period in Canadian history, for some writers the dawn of the modern industrial age, more significant than the Great War. Macdonald's confederation-era Conservatives had finally been swept out, replaced by Laurier's pragmatic Liberals, including his energetic Minister of the Interior, Clifford Sifton, who oversaw the immigration scramble into Canada's West. A long, nearly twenty-year recession was lifting by 1896 and development of the West fed a major industrial boom. Companies such as Massey-Harris, who had joined forces in 1891, expanded rapidly, based partly on their ability to serve the large-scale Western agriculture with tractors, threshers, combines, and the like. They represented the new industry as well, drawing labour from the countryside and such small centres as Orangeville, Kingston, and Brockville. An Ontario government of Conservatives also rode to power in 1896, and under a powerful coalition of business and government, wealth rolled in from Northern Ontario's newly opened mines. From this point on Toronto's economy ruled development throughout the entire province.

ROBINSON'S MUSÉE THEATRE

The Musée at 91 Yonge Street had just been renovated and the manager, Marvyn Robinson of Buffalo, was anxious to start the fall season of 1896 with new ideas, and "nothing cheap except prices". A *Globe* theatre column, no doubt lifting its copy straight from a press release, was happy to inform its readers that:

The success of the past week at the Musée theatre must be very gratifying to manager M.S. Robinson. Mr. Robinson is to Toronto what B.F. Keith is to New York, Boston, and Philadelphia. Mr. Keith has convinced the public of the large Eastern cities that they can be assured of the clean, refined performance for a small outlay; so, in fact has Mr. Robinson. It was he who built the present Musée and its success was instantaneous from the first. He believes in procuring the very best talent available, as has been demonstrated by the past week's bill. The wonderful Edison vitascope has created great enthusiasm at every performance ... (4 September, 1896)

And the *World* reported that "a strenuous effort will be made to get the dime museum idea out of the public mind and to put on first-class novelties and people that will tend to elevate instead of degrade."

Robinson thus premiered the Vitascope in Toronto and hyped it as Edison's latest marvel. In fact, the Vitascope had arrived in Toronto by a circuitous route. Robinson had leased the machine from Ed Houghton, a



POPULAR ENTERTAINMENT FOR THE NINETIES:
MUCH ECCENTRICITY OF THOUGHT

In the 1890s Toronto residents were thirsting for entertainment and edification. Roller and ice rinks were popular. Toronto's Business Directory for 1896 lists Robinson's Musée as a "Place of Amusement" along with the Caledonia, Moss Park, and Queen City rinks. Even the Toronto Opera House had originally been converted from a roller rink. Lectures of all kinds were popular too at the YMCAs and St. Lawrence Hall. For the refined there was the new Massey Hall on Shuter and concerts at the Horticultural Gardens.

Some attractions came and went: Edison's peep-show machine, the Kinetoscope, for instance — the thing of 1894. Then there was the Cyclorama, built in 1886, a whimsical, ten-sided building down on Front Street which operated as a diorama, where visitors could see large moving drawings suspended from the ceiling and lit from both sides, depicting events such as the Battle of Sedan. (The original Diorama dates back to 1822, an invention of the French showman and photography pioneer Louis Daguerre. Here was another forerunner to the movies that kept its special appeal long after the more amazing scientific entertainment machines took over.) Another attraction in 1896 was "Hanlon's New Superba" at the Princess Theatre. One startled reporter called it "the result of much eccentricity of thought". Superba was a "unique mechanical pantomimic spectacle, a vast moving panorama of graphically illustrated pictures combined with acrobatics, dialect and character [acts], singing and dancing, to excellent dramatic efforts and vast scenic elaboration." The movies probably killed this sort of thing. And yet the Tour of the Universe at today's CN Tower is a direct descendant and proof that simpler pleasures often overlap with new-fangled marvels.

travelling showman who purchased or leased it from the Holland Brothers of Ottawa, who in turn had rights for Canada, and got *their* rights either from Edison's U.S. agents Raff and Gammon or from Edison directly. Film historian Peter Morris surmises that the Holland Brothers wangled their free Canadian rights due to their successful marketing of Edison's Kinetoscope peep-show in 1894 and because Edison may have retained a soft spot (his only one probably) for his old home in Stratford, Ontario.

In the 1890s the little three-storey building at 91 Yonge Street played a unique and well-patronized role in the cultural life of Toronto. The ground-floor theatre, only 46 feet wide and 120 feet deep, was crammed with 700 seats. The Wonderland Waxworks also graced the same floor. A lecture hall and art gallery occupied the second floor, with the menagerie and curios up on the third. For a while there was a roof garden, and the management boasted about a "Ladies Parlour".

The theatre had started life in December 1890 as Robinson's Musée after \$50,000 worth of renovations converted the building from a store displaying stoves and scales. After the first year Robinson left and the theatre transformed itself in dizzying fashion into Moore's Musée, then the Crystal Theatre and Eden Museum, then in September 1896 Robinson was back. Its reputation lay in the somewhat scandalous display of freak shows, the menagerie, bizarre circus acts, and the waxworks. Previous seasons had featured "Barney Baldwin, the only living man with a broken neck; German Rose, the Midget Queen; John Bass, the Ossified Man — dead yet living; and Che-Mah, the only Chinese Lilliputian." On 5 March, 1894 a man died in the building during a rather mysterious stairway rush of patrons. The janitor was arrested for pushing the victim onto a concrete landing but the charges were dropped.

In the days before public cultural institutions, dime museums of this sort were not entirely without educational merit. For a number of years the theatre employed a full-time German-trained artist, Sylvester Z. Poli, who continually sculpted new wax busts of historical and contemporary celebrities. Poli's "Twelve Stations of the Cross" was a favourite. Nevertheless, the "Music and Drama" critic at the *Mail and Empire* was happy to see a change:

In common with others who wish success to the caterers of cheap amusements for the people, I am glad to hear that Manager M.S. Robinson of the Musée has banished the chamber of horrors, with its dissecting room realism, and has decided to dispense this season with the two-headed girls and other monstrosities.

For the stage-show, wax museum, X-Rays, art gallery, Ladies Parlour, and living pictures at Robinson's you could get in for ten cents.

In those years Robinson's Musée sat in the very heart of the city, at the centre of an arts and entertainment district surrounded by stable businesses and much wealth. It was just around the corner from Toronto's two largest theatres, the prestigious Grand Opera House, at 11 Adelaide Street W., and the slightly less refined Toronto Opera House at number 25. The Princess Theatre, further west, at 167 King Street W., specialized in musical fare ranging from opera to Gilbert and Sullivan. One block north of the Musée, at 23 Temperance Street, was the Temperance Hall offering music and concerts; by 1898 it was the site for the Empire Theatre, then by 1905 renamed and as risqué as the Star for vaudeville and burlesque.

In the same block as Robinson's, audience line-ups snaked past John Griffiths Cycle Corp "The Largest Cycle Dealers in the World" that regularly advertised its expensive, very fashionable and newly comfortable products in the Toronto papers. Other stores in the block, many quite stable and long-lived, included a wine merchant, as well as hat, cigar, furniture, and fur retailers. Number 83 Yonge housed the offices of the *World* newspaper and number 75 was a large four-storey, professional building, home to lawyers, real estate agents, engineers, and the wonderfully named Karma Vending Company. A Mr. McGee, who operated a large foundry behind Yonge Street, owned the entire block.

The famous and rather posh Yonge Street Arcade, Toronto's first indoor mall, running through to Victoria Street, drew its customers to the next block north.

Yet the poor were not far off either. Just adjacent to the ever-expanding Eaton's empire at Yonge and Queen was The Ward, a densely populated centre for poor Jewish and other immigrants, usually referred to as a slum. The evocative Lawren Harris painting, titled "The Eaton Manufacturing Building from the Ward" (1911) shows the cottages occupied by Eaton's workers dwarfed by the company's newest building. In the 1890s a senior salesman at Eaton's could take home nearly \$12 per week, though women in sales usually had to settle for \$8. Toronto carpenters made about \$20 per week and conductors on the newly electrified street railway might earn as much as \$25. Also in the 1890s, the building at Yonge and Shuter just two blocks north of the Musée housed the Yonge Street Mission and the City Mission ministering to waifs and the indigent. Two blocks east sat the imposing Fred Victor Mission building, established in 1894 by the Massey family (in memory of a son, Fred) to administer charity, education, and a basement, concrete-floored, drunk tank.

By 1896 Toronto had become a complex city even by today's standards, with a population of nearly 200,000. To reach these folks, Robinson advertised the Musée every day throughout that fall of 1896; a time when fully 93 per cent of Torontonians could read and write. Yet surprisingly, for all those ads in the *Globe*, the *World*, the *Mail and Empire*, the *Star*, the *Evening News*, and the *Telegram* he never included the address.



Museum of Modern Art, New York

May Irwin and John Rice in the big clinch from Edison's "The Kiss", 1896.

Toronto's theatre critics regularly commented in thumbnail form on the happenings at the Musée, usually near the bottom of their columns, below the more prestigious events at the Grand, the Toronto, and the Princess. Clearly the writers didn't quite know how to pigeonhole what they had seen. "Edison's vitascope," said one reporter, "will be put to a severe test next week at the Musée, when it will present the cataract of Niagara Falls and the whirlpool rapids among the series." Incidentally this Niagara footage was probably the first Canadian content recorded on film, likely shot by an Edison cameraman. Critics never analysed the content and in the first years the films rarely had anything approaching a plot, so comments on the life-like nature of the photography and mention of established stage and vaudeville stars such as Canadian May Irwin or the Fuller sisters took precedence.

The theatre columns show few hints of criticism or negative comments. Virtually all the movie reviews betray traces of press releases issued by theatre managers. For the Musée's opening day the *Mail and Empire's* "Music and The Drama" column informed readers that "Mr. Robinson, believing that the general public has no taste for monstrosities, has decided to have entertainments that are clean and wholesome, and perfectly free from a suspicion of pandering to morbid curiosity." This hint about the past years' attractions shows that theatre critics of the day thus panned only in retrospect.

It is odd that Toronto newspapers of the time, which by today's standards routinely flirted with slander and libel in covering national and provincial politics, mainly played a booster's role in dealing with theatre fare. Thus, much of the newspaper enthusiasm for the first days of motion pictures in Toronto cannot be fully trusted. When the *Globe* columnist reported on 4 September that "the wonderful Edison Vitascope has created great enthusiasm at every performance" we don't really know what that means. This positive coverage might explain why the ads for Toronto's first movies were so small — two or three column inches. Why bother with larger ads when the paper's critic will gladly tout the show with copy from your press release or phrases supplied by Edison's publicity agents? Toronto's papers were not alone in this. The terms "wondrous" and "marvellous", no doubt coined by Edison sales staff to promote the Vitascope, appear constantly during this period in advertising throughout North America. The Musée ads in 1896 and 1897 were always the same size as those for more prestigious theatres and grouped by the newspaper layout artist to appear together. Thus, the movies played off the status of the theatre in drawing audiences. Unlike earlier display ads for the Musée back in its freak-show days, which had featured art-work one-eighth of a page of the Two-headed Boy and the Ossified Man, the movie ads were tiny. Robinson clearly didn't think the expense was justified.

Since the mid-nineteenth century grand industrial expositions have provided an ideal launching pad for science, technology, and entertainment. The Chicago World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 had set new standards of what to expect in the way of scientific marvels and grandiose spectacle (Edison began sales of his kitescope there). Thus many Toronto viewers got their first exposure to living pictures at the "Ex". Toronto's exhibition still drew on the prestige of London's mammoth 1851 Crystal Palace events, and the architectural centrepiece at the "Ex", a wonderful two-storey, iron and glass concoction, was still called the Crystal Palace. Visitors to the exhibition grounds had become accustomed to being amazed.



The 1896 fair drew astonishingly large crowds. On 8 September the papers reported 100,000 visitors, the best day ever. Also on display that year, among hundreds of attractions, was the grandly touted "electrically-lighted spectacle performance" of the Fall of the Bastille at the Grandstand, the "finest display of birdseed ever shown in Canada," Miss Ellen Vetter, "spiral ascensionist," and "Sir Hassan Ben Ali's troupe of Arabs," — as well as the "monster beaver carved out of soap."

The full gamut of Toronto's social strata were drawn by these appeals. It was only a short walk across the tracks to the fairgrounds from the huge Massey-Harris works and growing Inglis factories, which together employed 2,000 people. In addition, pleasure ships from Kingston, St. Catharines, and Oswego, New York docked right in front. Toronto's massive waterfront

expansion was still years away and the Crystal Palace grandly overlooked the lake. Special train excursions from points throughout the province were advertised daily. The street railway, electrified only in 1891, and the profusion of comfortable bicycles created an intoxicating mobility as well, and riders used the streetcars as an excursion, not merely a last-ditch commuting vehicle. Toronto's fair thus played a major role in the entertainment and educational life of the province. The lavish President's luncheons for VIPs got extensive front-page news coverage. High-profile speakers used the occasion to discuss municipal policies and current social matters. There was even talk of adjourning Parliament in Ottawa because so many MPs wished to attend.

The manager of the Exhibition was H.J. Hill, a showman with his ear to the ground. It was Hill's job to book the ever larger spectacles that appeared each year in the grandstand and to juggle the entertainment needs of the farmers, the Labour Day delegates, and the society types. For 1896 Hill contracted with the two Montreal agents of the Lumière company to show films on the Midway. Louis Minier and Louis Pupier had been exploiting the machine and the films feverishly all summer. As travelling showmen, with a limited programme, they were surely delighted to move into Ontario. Hill placed the Cinematographe front and centre in his Exhibition newspaper ads. Yet with so much going on, sadly the Toronto newspapers mentioned the Lumière Cinematographe only in passing.

The annual report for the 1896 Exhibition shows that the Cinematographe grossed a respectable \$2,139.95 over the 12 days of the fair, and that M. Minier's share laid new plans.

Immediately following the close of the Exhibition Hill's confidence in the new living pictures took him right to 96 Yonge Street, directly across from Robinson's Musée. His ad for 21 September pulled out all the stops, calling the Cinematographe the "Wonder of the Century" and "the Greatest and Best Novel feature at the late industrial fair." This was a much expanded programme offering "An Hour's Tour Through Europe" and over 60 views "all new representing scenes taken from life in all parts of the world." Admission was raised to 25 cents. As usual the newspapers saved their superlatives for the machine, casually stating that the Cinematographe is "a long way ahead of any other invention of the kind known."

Then on 3 October, only a month after Robinson's first show, the management at the Toronto Opera House brought in yet another machine, the Kinematographe, "a prominent feature" of a vaudeville touring package, the Hopkins Trans-Oceanic Programme. At the same time both Hill and the Edison agents had scurried off on tour: in Hamilton at the Association Hall, 19 to 24 October; at the London City Hall, 26 October; the Galt Town Hall, 16 November; and the Guelph City Hall, 18 November. The Edison Vitascope also premiered in the London

*Yonge Street looking south
from Richmond, 1899.
The cinema at #91 is in mid-
block in front of the
second hydro pole.*



Music Hall with a variety bill, 19 to 24 October. And in Quebec M. Minier kept up his hectic pace showing the Lumiere programme in Quebec City, Trois-Rivieres, St. Hyacinthe, and probably many smaller places in those first months.

The *Toronto Business Directory* for 1897 lists a new place of amusement — the Cinematographe, a storefront at 3 Shuter Street, on the corner of Yonge. This may have been the return of Hill's business venture. Like his earlier shows at 96 Yonge Street, the Shuter location was a vacant store, with folding chairs, plus a minimal projection booth and screen.

In 1894 vaudeville was born. From today's popular memory it seems that vaudeville preceded the movies because so many film stars like Buster Keaton, Mae West and the Marx Brothers got their start in vaudeville. Yet movies and vaudeville were born almost simultaneously — a direct response to the needs and possibilities of new city life. While Robinson was premiering the Vitascope in 1896 he was also launching small-time vaudeville in Toronto. It was upstairs with a bill of fare that included the Hearon's Lady Orchestra, and a "host of bright people". In November, when he changed strategies again, his promotion stated, "Beginning with a matinee to-day, the new Bijou Theatre will open on the B.F. Keith plan, giving a continuous performance from 1:30-5:00 afts and from 7:15 to 10:30 eves."

Indeed, some audiences probably mistook the moving pictures as simply another vaudeville or variety act. They really were not that different from the magician or the ventriloquist in the preceding act, especially when accompanied, as they usually were, by a presenter who introduced and talked over the movie. When the Shea brothers, owners of a large Buffalo entertainment company, rebuilt the Musée in 1899 to hold 1,700 seats, they

also ran it as a vaudeville house. Then in 1910 when they built their really big theatre, the 2,000-seat Shea's Victoria, at Richmond and Victoria, it too featured vaudeville, though the promotion noted that a kinematographe machine had been installed in the balcony as well. Unlike Robinson, the Sheas could apparently hedge their bets with a good deal of working capital.

THE CLASSES AND THE MASSES

Many in Toronto's genteel classes welcomed the Edison Vitascope show at the Musée. It was a big change from the chamber of horrors and dissecting-room realism of previous events in the theatre. The phrase "classes and masses", first coined by British Prime Minister W.E. Gladstone in 1886, reflects sardonically the social and economic confusion of the era, with such massive changes brought on by modern capitalism and the new urban life. Robinson's all-day showings hoped to scoop in everyone, from school outings in the day to late-night revellers or perhaps Eaton's workers after the shift change.

Children flocked to Toronto theatres. Many were undoubtedly deflected from factory work, after introduction in 1893 of provincial child-labour laws and the new politics of reform spearheaded by the Children's Aid Society. J.J. Kelso, a leader in these humane, practical reforms, worried about the combination of children and theatres. Unfortunately his moral crusade adopted an unpleasant bias as well. He testified in 1893 that "the class of plays the boys go to see is Irish comedy and Irish drama of the most sensational sort ... full of the worst kinds of villainy, and the villain is held up as a most

heroic character. The desire to attend these places is sometimes the means of leading youths into crime. They have no money, and they resort to thieving in order to gratify this desire."

Thus early cinema was invariably a children's cinema and the magically life-like scenes of far-away places, trick films, trains, boats, soldiers, and comedies made perfect sense. A *Star* reporter with a flair for metaphor had no problem with that. "Ladies who propose to send their children and professors of schools who propose to take their pupils to see the Cinematographe are strongly advised to avail themselves of the morning seances to-day."

Until the 1980s most film histories treated the silent era in broad strokes, skimming over the early, so-called primitive days as a time when the movies appealed only to a working-class audience, in rough and unsavoury surroundings. For Toronto at least this is false. Movies actually helped the Musée improve its image. And showings at the Exhibition, the Toronto Opera House and Massey Hall reflected broad class appeal. The association of movies with working-class audiences in unsavoury settings applies better to the later Nickelodeon period after 1906, or to New York and London where hundreds of theatres fostered a class segmentation not possible in Toronto. Audiences at the Musée might well have been unsavoury but only by the most elite standards, for the audience undoubtedly mixed the immigrant and working-classes with artists, and white-collar sales clerks.

So in the beginning movies were presented as good clean entertainment, closer to science than circus — a sign of nineteenth-century civilization and progress straight from the capitals of the universe, New York, London and Paris. Much of the advertising and publicity centred on the machine itself. And for that purpose Edison was star and impresario, a much easier model to cite than his rivals. After all, it was Edison's combination of science and practical technology that made him "The Wizard" years earlier with the phonograph and light bulb. In contrast, the pure science and high art of Europe was a little too abstract, even though the Lumière company mirrored Edison's operation, a highly profitable manufacturing enterprise that latched on to movies. The theatre columnist for the *World*, in an article called "Reopening of the Musée" (29 August, 1896) certainly bought the Edison myth, stating that the Vitascope is "the great inventor's triumph in reproducing a play in everything excepting words."

JUST THE SAME, AND COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

The Toronto Exhibition continued to present the Cinematographe on The Midway for two more years, and in a new development for 1898 the Massey-Harris Company unveiled specially commissioned films of their tractors at work in Ontario fields. These long-lost movies, shot by an Edison cameraman, were almost cer-

tainly the first movie scenes of rural Ontario and were also among the first advertising films. The debut of scenes shot in Toronto itself would have to wait until 1904 when a Canadian, George Scott, released the *Great Toronto Fire*, showing buildings blowing up and fire fighters at work during a tragedy that destroyed 114 buildings in only eight hours.

By mid-November 1896 Robinson had renamed his theatre the Bijou and elevated the movies to the lecture theatre upstairs. He had also switched projectors and was now presenting Robert Paul's Animatographe, fraudulently advertised as a new Edison machine. A fire at the end of 1897 forced the Bijou out of business temporarily but Marvyn Robinson kept popping up in new locations. In 1898 he was back at it, this time in the old Shaftesbury Theatre at 29 Queen Street West. This became the New Bijou, presenting vaudeville. As the months progressed, however, Robinson grew more and more desperate, staging large-scale animal acts, like Jessie the Educated Baboon, then finally succumbing to the burlesque of the London Gaiety Girls.

For Robinson and Hill then, the living pictures remained profitable but short-lived, similar to scores of other scientific and entertaining novelties of the period. Hill's Shuter Street venture was gone by 1898. Even Edison and the Lumière family failed to see much of a future for movies. Edison was more interested in promoting his phonograph for business dictation and the Lumières reaped higher profits from their photo equipment business. But throughout the late 1890s new films and brash promoters pressed on, hard at work on Spanish-American and Boer War films, comedies, and scenic views from across Canada and around the world. A completely different era lay just around the corner.

As for the little theatre at 91 Yonge Street, after Robinson gave up the Musée in 1898 the building was taken over by the Shea's Company and drastically renovated into one large 1,500-seat venue, mainly for vaudeville. In 1905 another serious fire at the theatre, now being called Shea's Yonge Street, was first blamed, falsely, on the Kinematographe machine. Blaming the movie machine for the fire may have been an innocent comment but it also reflected on the media's new hostility toward the movies. The honeymoon was over. The Sheas sold the theatre in 1910 and new owners called it The Strand. By the 1930s burlesque ruled here too. ♦

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FRANK SLIDE

Did the Greed of the Coal-Owners
Bring Turtle Mountain Crashing Down?

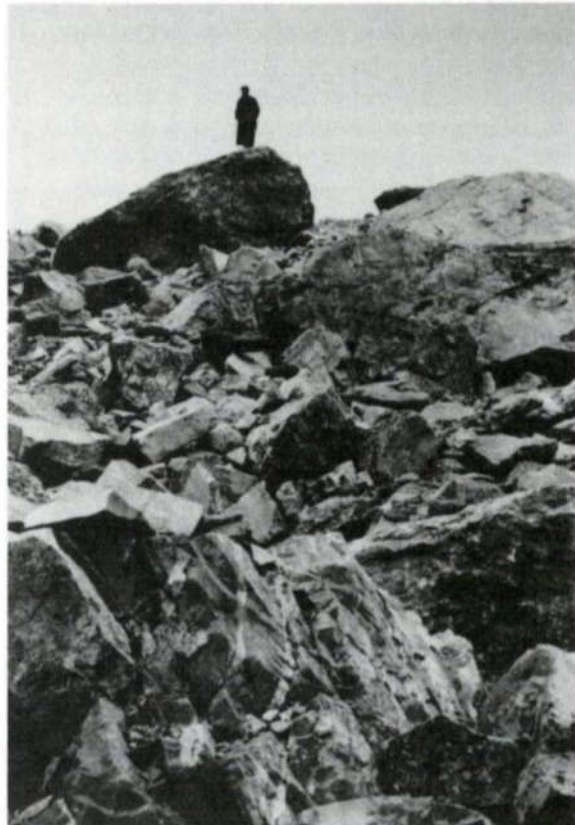
By Allen Seager

Few events in Canada's recorded history have left such a visible reminder as the Frank Slide of 29 April 1903, which sent half a mountainside hurtling down into the valley of Alberta's Crow's Nest Pass, partly obliterating the frontier mining town of Frank, North-West Territory.

Nine decades later, there is very little evidence of nature's healing of the scar, comprising a surrealistic planetscape of several square miles of shattered limestone. For occasional visitors it is a noteworthy tourist attraction, recently enhanced by the Government of Alberta's Frank Slide Interpretation Centre, more generally dedicated to preserving the industrial heritage of the valley. Though remembered in a number of popular accounts, there is, nevertheless, a remarkable lack of historical interest in the Frank Slide.

The signing of the Crow's Nest Pass agreement between the Government of Canada and the CPR in 1897 set the stage for serious industrial expansion. The first officially recognized settlement in Alberta's Crow's Nest Pass was founded in 15 November 1898, at the tenth siding of the Crow's Nest Pass railway. It adopted the name Blairmore, in honour of the Dominion Minister of Railways, New Brunswicker A.G. Blair. Blairmore subsequently became the commercial "hub" of the valley, boasting a population of 1,137 in the census of 1911. Though not yet an incorporated town with fixed boundaries, the census of 1901 credits "Blairmore" with a population of 247, including pioneer residents in the neighbouring hamlet of Frank, where the first of the valley's coal mines was prospected in December 1900.

The Frank mines reported their first output and employment to the territorial authorities in 1901 — a modest 15,000 tons, won by an average workforce of 54 men. Blairmore's first staple industry, sawmilling, was indirectly related to the mines. Senator Peter McLaren, a prominent figure in the history of the central Canadian lumber industry, led this development. In 1900 his booming Blairmore mill had a capacity of 7-8 million board feet *per annum*, but its longer-term prospects were uncertain. High mountain ranges cut off an already limited interior rainfall east of the Great Divide, and British



Columbia producers easily gained a comparative advantage in the prairie building-construction trade. Local lumbering continued, but the main commodity would be pit-props for the collieries.

A Butte, Montana, entrepreneur, H.L. Frank, founder of Canadian-American Coal and Coke, would be the first *bona fide* mining capitalist in Alberta's Crow's Nest Pass. Frank was more of a promoter than a mine operator, and, significantly, he was actually in the process of selling off his Canadian properties at the time of the great calamity that befell the town that bore his name.

Frank's major partner in this enterprise, and the original prospector of the local mines, was a fellow Montanan who went by the name of S.W. Gebo. This

Gebo, however, is referred to in some accounts as Sam Gibeau, a "wonderful French Canadian adventurer" who had presumably emigrated to the United States and modified his name. Ironically, his French-Canadian background would prove to be a useful asset in the course of a remarkable business deal that transferred effective control of Canadian-American Coal and Coke to metropolitan French interests during the year 1903. H.L. Frank still held the post of president in April or May of that year, but Canadian-American Coal and Coke's year-end report to the Federal Mines Branch for 1903 lists its chief executive officer as O.L. Liegeart, apparently of Paris. Gebo, who personally travelled to France to secure the deal, stayed on as managing director.

Apart from Gebo, all of the members of the new board of directors were French or Belgian. Their names, as published in the Alberta Mines Branch *Annual Report* for 1908, were Georges Berthier, A. Boland, Felix Colomer, and Fernand Leconte. An article published in a French technical journal in 1904 surveyed the Crow's Nest coal basin in amazing detail and adds that Canadian-American Coal and Coke "*a prise son capital en France pour une grande partie.*" It did not fail to add that the company had suffered serious losses as a result of a natural catastrophe the previous year. This could not have been a terribly helpful advertisement, but the journal believed that, with the general expansion of settlement, Western Canadian coal properties were destined for a "great future".

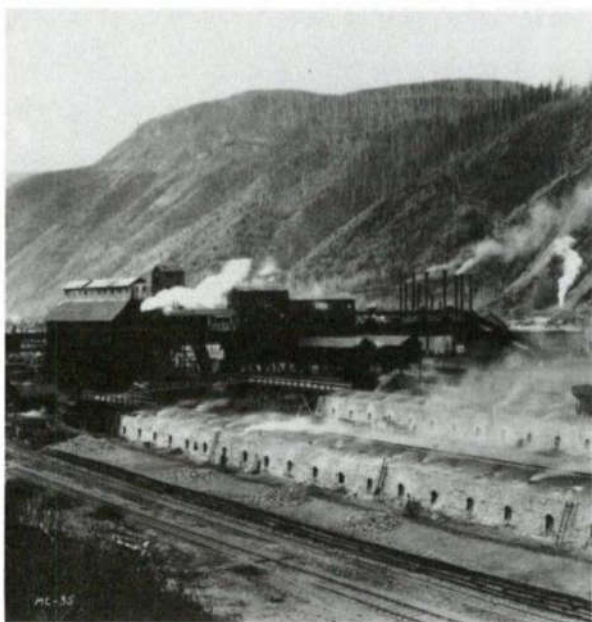
Rather more need be said about the French connection in Alberta's Crow's Nest Pass, a little-known but

crucially important factor in the history of the valley's industrial development. The Gebo-Liegeart group, in truth, was not the most important component of what was to prove an enduring French presence in the Blairmore area. Indeed, France's interest in the region demonstrably predated 1903, the honour of "discovery" belonging to a financial adventurer *cum* industrial administrator named J.J. (Jules) Fleutot. Fleutot represented a group of venture capitalists incorporated in 1900 as the United Goldfields of British Columbia, evidently formed with the intention of joining the ranks of a large number of speculative enterprises in the precious-metals sector. Finding no suitable gold-mining properties in British Columbia, the group's backers had, in the words of their official history, "compromised for coal" in the North-West Territories. Fleutot personally staked 5,280 acres of coal lands just north of Frank in 1901. This property eventually embraced nearly 14,000 acres and formed the largest private landholdings in the valley by the 1920s. As disposed by the federal government under a policy of alienation that lasted until 1907, former Dominion coal lands in Alberta had the material advantage of being unencumbered by rents or royalties. The availability of coal lands for purchase was a definite incentive for French investors in the Crow's Nest Pass. Among other things, no such terms were available in France, where virtually all "coal-owners" were in fact leaseholders of the state.

The so-called United Goldfields company reported no coal output to the Canadian authorities in 1901 or 1902 but employed 27 miners and mine labourers in the latter year. These workers were engaged in the development of what were to become known as the Bellevue and Lille mines of the West Canadian Collieries. On 2 April 1903, mere weeks before the Frank calamity, the Fleutot group were re-incorporated in London, England, as the West Canadian Collieries Ltd. The founding and longtime president was a coal and textile baron named Alphonse Wicart, and the operative headquarters of the firm became his home city of Lille, France.

The Wicart-Fleutot group represented the more formidable consortium of the two French enterprises in the valley. For example, Canadian-American Coal and Coke never produced any coke, a by-product of coal used in metallurgy. It was and remained a simple "steam" coal operator, supplying a low-value commodity used exclusively as locomotive fuel for the CPR. The West Canadian Collieries, for its part, was determined to diversify its markets and indeed the speedy construction of a battery of 50 coke ovens at Lille during 1903 reflected a bold economic vision. The company's federal charter specified its ambitions, helpfully summarized by a skeptical Opposition leader, Robert Borden:

We have coal-mining, smelting, the operation of open-hearth steel plants, bridge construction,



West Canadian Collieries, Lille mine and coke ovens were developed circa 1903-1912.

National Archives of Canada

machine shops, manufacture of the products of coal, farming and stock raising ... manufacture and use of electricity, water, gas and electric, hydraulic compressed air or other power — it may be all right, but it seems rather comprehensive.

Borden wondered if the attention of the government had been directed to the "unusual details of the West Canadian Collieries Act." He received no direct answer to his question, but there can be little doubt that French investment in the Alberta coalfields was warmly welcomed by the members of the Laurier government.

Whether or not individual members of the government were compromised in mining speculation, competing claims and conflicting interest inevitably complicated the state's responsibilities regarding the regulation of coal operations, which were notoriously free-wheeling in the early years of the Crow's Nest Pass coalfield. While fairly detailed mines legislation existed at the territorial level, and a small number of full-time officials were employed to monitor mine safety, it appears that government took no action that would have seriously impeded economic development or jeopardized investor confidence. There were also serious flaws in the administrative system. Under both territorial responsible government, ostensibly won in 1897, and provincial autonomy, achieved in 1905, there existed an anomalous division of powers in the Alberta coalfields. The Dominion authorities retained control over lands and resources, while the so-called local authorities were responsible for general administration, including the enforcement of the mines acts. This is to say that the territorial government possessed no political leverage to speak of in their dealings with the coal companies, while the federal government successfully evaded responsibility for any local hardships arising out of its grander developmental policies. Making matters worse, neither territorial nor provincial government garnered any direct revenues from coal extraction, meaning that problems in coal-mining areas inevitably ranked low on any list of their political priorities. In practice, of course, there also existed a seamless web of political patronage in the administration of the Alberta coalfields in this period, with Liberal partisans dominating at every level. In a variety of ways, then, coal miners and their communities were rendered especially vulnerable to the coal companies by unique and peculiar features of Western Canadian development.

The coal operators' own priorities were exactly as one might have expected: to maximize production and win the battle for profits. These factors, combined with the inevitable "trials-and-errors" associated with development of any new coalfield, contributed to the unenviable record of the Crow's Nest Pass coal operators in the area of colliery safety, with major disasters occurring at Bellevue in 1910 and at nearby Hillcrest in 1914. It is in this particular context that the Frank Slide of 1903, a

supposedly "natural" occurrence, assumes its proper place in Western Canadian history.

The Frank mines officially opened at a public fete on 10 September 1901. Local historian Frank Anderson writes of the "lavish ceremony that saw Sir Fred Haultain, Premier of the North-West Territories, and Sir Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior in the Laurier government, making proud speeches that everyone promptly forgot." Constable T. Clark of the NWMP, another invited guest, recalled the celebration: "A French chef had been engaged for the occasion, dinner being served almost immediately upon our arrival ... Visitors were taken into the mine in empty coal cars covered with clean white canvas." What they saw was a vivid illustration of exactly why the coal resources of the area held such a strong attraction for venture capital in general and "French gold" in particular: "The seam of coal at the mine entrance was 14 feet wide, while 1,200 feet further in the seam broadened out to nearly 20 feet of solid, glistening, jet black coal."

In an extreme example of a general geological phenomenon in the Crow's Nest coalfield the seam the Frank miners had begun to work was "pitched" upwards at approximately 82 degrees. Among other things, the force of gravity, the enemy of efficiency in coal-mining, could be turned to the operator's advantage. In a personal memoir written some years afterwards, Raoul Green — a French engineer then employed by the West Canadian Collieries — offered a useful description and financial analysis of the Canadian-American Coal and Coke Company's operation: "The Frank seam was a vertical seam. The rooms up the pitch were over 100' wide — requiring very little dynamite to blast it out. In some cases it nearly mined itself, which showed that there was a great pressure on the coal. This meant lots of cheap coal — not many miners. The CPR paid only \$1.75 per ton of coal, but the Frank Co. made lots of money in those days." To put the figure into perspective, the selling price for West Canadian steam coal in 1904 was \$1.90 a ton, and the government had initially set a ceiling price of \$2.00 a ton, under a little-known clause in the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement. The West Canadian Collieries produced 182,000 tons of steam and coking coal in 1905, for example, with an average workforce of 348, or a little more than 500 tons *per capita*. Although the Canadian-American Company's statistics for 1902 are unavailable and the figures for the following year are complicated by the temporary disruption of mining activity as a result of the slide, the Frank colliery produced 101,000 tons with a workforce averaging 100 during 1903, or 1,000 tons *per capita*. These are very rough calculations of productivity but it appears that the peculiar geological conditions at Frank offered a substantial comparative advantage. As M. Green remarked, "everything was 'hunkey dory'" — until the events of 29 April 1903.

Significantly, territorial government officials are

known to have been on the receiving end of troubling correspondence about the Frank operation long before the slide. These took the form of complaints about internal mine safety by mines inspectors as well as the local officers of the Miners' Union, then an affiliate of the Western Federation of Miners. As early as 16 April 1901, a letter addressed to the Deputy Commissioner of Public Works in Regina claimed that the mine was in "very serious condition" and might cave in at "a second's notice." On 11 June 1902 the secretary of the union received a promise of remedial action on a series of matters related to the hazards of mining huge underground chambers like those in the Frank colliery. There is no evidence that any improvements were made — perhaps they were technically impossible. Two men lost their lives in small coal-gas explosion on 28 September; frightened by the blast, they fell down a coal chute. If such accidents were commonplace enough, unique to the Frank situation was an apparent link between safety issues at the workplace and the physical security of the town itself.

The Frank colliery consisted of a series of level drifts and close-to-perpendicular shafts inside Turtle Mountain. A paper read in 1922 by Dr. J.D. MacKenzie to the Royal Society summarizes the state of roughly contemporary geological knowledge about "the Historical and Structural Geology of the Southernmost Rocky Mountains of Canada", including a "prominent feature" he called the "Turtle Mountain anticline ... formed of steeply dipping fault blocks of repeated strips of strata [that would be] caused, leaving the faulting out of consideration, by the westward rotation of a previously formed symmetric anticline." In plain English, Turtle Mountain was a particularly unstable body of comparatively recently uplifted sedimentary rock. Raoul Green, mining engineer for the West Canadian Collieries, recalled that during the early months of 1903 the mountain "was just hanging loose — just ready to come down — and pieces falling down with dust clouds surrounding [the] sides and [the] top of [the] mountain. Anybody could see that something would come down, but nobody thought it would be so tremendous. The vertical coal

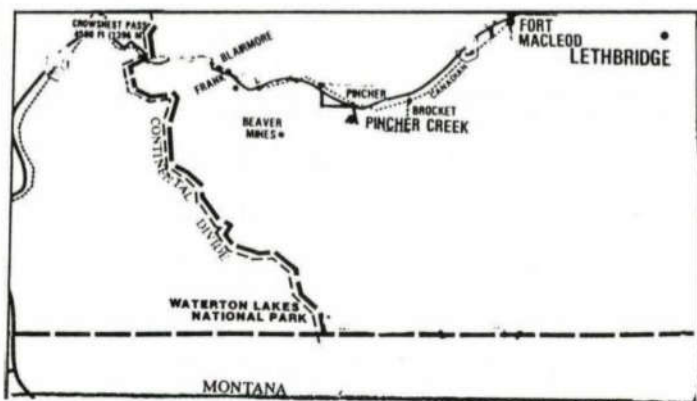
seam was contributing to loosen the limestone cliffs — and give the necessary impulse to fall."

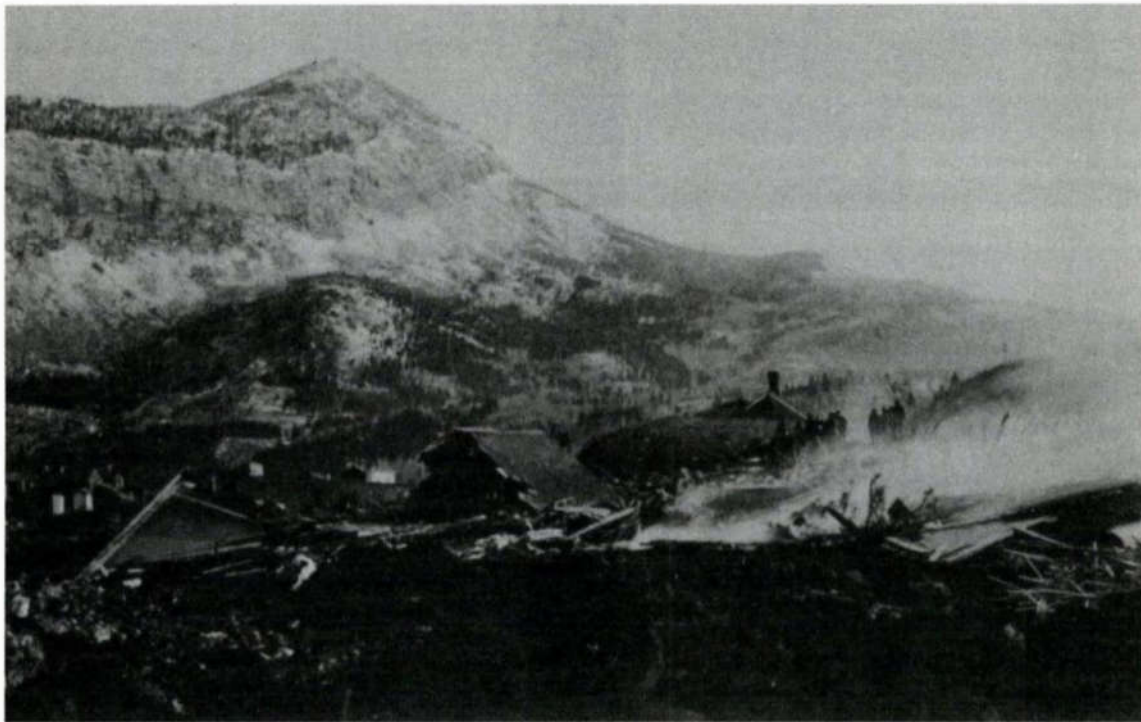
This interpretation would be seconded by Territorial Mines Inspector William Pearce, whose private correspondence regarding the Frank Slide was brought to light in 1979 by James R. Kerr of the Crow's Nest Pass Historical Society. In a letter written in 1915, Pearce affirmed that reckless exploitation of the coal seam set the stage for disaster. He further alleged efforts to promote the property as a low-cost producer lay at the root of the local difficulties. "The result was that there was not sufficient support left between the walls, and those coming together caused the slide." One might legitimately ask why Pearce did not come forward earlier with this assessment, but his own testimonial provides a cryptic explanation: "There were all sorts of wild speculations as to the cause of the slide. There was never any doubt in my mind, but as I was there in an official capacity I would not express my views except confidentially." Only a judicial inquiry could have exposed such highly sensitive matters as the relationship between the business of mining and the costly calamity that befell the town of Frank. Significantly, no public investigation was ever held. Frank and Gebo, among others, were never called to confirm or deny the various speculations. The truth of the matter seems to be that something like an official cover-up took place. Paradoxically, the larger-than-life character of the Frank Slide made it relatively easy to obscure the relevant details. An excellent illustration of how even serious journalists would treat the story is found in D.A. Stewart's *A Disaster in the Rockies*. Carefully concluding that the "causes of this sudden rupture may never be surely known," Stewart found in a quotation from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* sufficient explanation:

The night has been unruly ... and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' the air; strange screams
of death...
of dire combustion and confused events...
Some say the earth
Was feverous and did shake.

The Frank Slide began shortly after 4 o'clock in the morning of 29 April 1903, and lasted for approximately 100 seconds; the "explosion" could be heard 100 miles away. Survivor Arthur Graham remembered that "My parents [first] thought it was a mine explosion. But my father was puzzled ... He didn't understand what was going on."

The belief that volcanic activity had begun was apparently widespread. Mark Drumm, secretary of the local Board of Trade, cabled Prime Minister Laurier: "Terrible catastrophe here. Eruption Turtle Mountain devastated miles of territory. One hundred killed. Must have Government aid ... Answer quick." These communications were forwarded to the Ministry of the Interior,





Homes at the east end of Frank are engulfed in fallen rock after the slide. Many lives were lost here.

whose officials became "very much exercised" about the situation, which raised the spectres of earthquake and massive flooding. All these fears proved unfounded. Like a fall of top coal in a mine, the Frank Slide had relieved the geological pressure and Turtle Mountain moved no more.

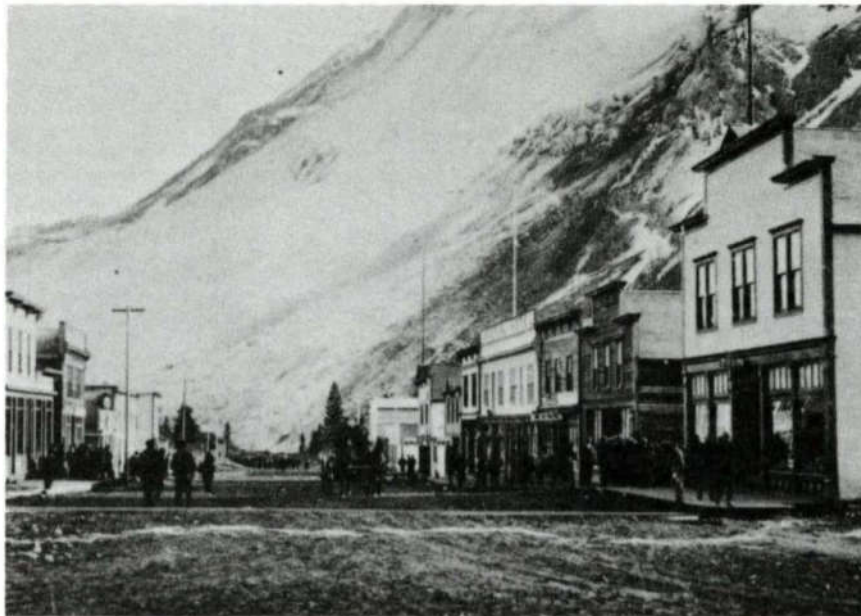
Not the least of official worries was the fact that the avalanche had buried about a mile of the vital rail line through the Crow's Nest Pass, effectively isolating Frank and Blairmore. Only the heroic deeds of a CPR brakeman, Sid Choquette, prevented an eastbound passenger train, the "Spokane Flyer," from colliding with the prostrate mountain, which would have doubled or tripled the number of fatalities. By pure luck, a good portion of the village of Frank lay outside the immediate path of destruction, although fires sparked by the massive friction and the spontaneous combustion of tons of rock-dust added to the collateral damage there. CPR crews west of the slide shuttled survivors to Blairmore early in the morning; later that day they straggled back to survey the damage and search for lost comrades and family members.

With few exceptions, nothing could be done for the victims already entombed under immovable masses of rock. Only one large group were able to extricate themselves from the clutches of oblivion. These were 17 working miners inside the Frank colliery — the main entrances and surface plant of which had been destroyed. Michael Androz shared the terror of others on the mid-night shift when "the whole mine was pushed together like the bellows of an accordion." Stopped at their usual

exit by a solid wall of coal and limestone, and "expecting death [at] any minute," they plodded 4,000 ft. back into the mountain heading for the air shaft. Partly blocked by coal and limestone, this did provide a way out. After 12 hours of frantic digging, they emerged, "far above the heads of their rescuers, who were desperately tunnelling into the mountain to reach them."

Androz was lucky to find his wife unharmed, the family's memoir recording that Sophia Androz had been "going out of her mind by the cries of the children." Overall, however, Frank in 1903 saw a curious reversal of roles for a mine disaster. Normally, those at the surface gathered to hear the bad news from underground.

Unlike the typical mine disaster, the exact number of casualties would never be calculated. A group of men who had been living in tents on the outskirts of town were completely swallowed up by the rockslide, but no one knew how many. There were in the end 69 documented fatalities, 21 of them listed as miners by occupation. Nineteen adult males of other occupations, including railwaymen, are known to have died, as did seven women and 22 of their children. (Of the census population of 247 in Blairmore-Frank in June 1901, there were only 19 married women, but this number had undoubtedly increased over the intervening period.) Certain anomalies in the official tally, found in the records of the North West Mounted Police, illustrate the difficulties of calculation. For example, "four Finlanders, names unknown" are listed among the dead colliers: Finnish immigrants were by implication miners or mine



A side of Turtle Mountain, scraped clean by the slide, looms starkly over the remaining buildings of Frank as surviving miners parade through the ruined east end.

labourers. Working people made no fine distinctions in any case. All of the bodies that were recovered — excepting six of seven members of the Leitch family, prominent merchants of Frank — were, the police reported, buried by the Miners Union.

Governmental response to the events of 29 April had its tragicomic side. Officials dithered for the better part of the day over the question of jurisdictional responsibility: territorial or federal. This was rather beside the point, but did highlight the absurdity of the existing division of powers: Drumm's Board of Trade later thought it prudent to pass a resolution in support of any "unconstitutional" measures that might have been necessary to cope with the situation! The federal Ministry of the Interior inevitably took charge of the dossier. Around 5:00 PM on 29 April the Mounted Police commandeered a train at Lethbridge, but experienced various difficulties *en route* to the Crow's Nest Pass, including a grueling hike through the rubble at Frank. They finally arrived in Blairmore on the night of 30 April. Mines inspector Pearce, who was in the Lethbridge party, recalls that Blairmore was in a state of bedlam; almost no one had gone to bed "and of those awake, there were not 3% sober." D.A. Stewart, writing for the *Canadian Magazine*, noted that "all extremes of coolness and excitement were displayed" in this moment of extreme psychological stress. Law-and-order was nonetheless maintained. Of the characteristic efficiency of the Mounted Police Stewart asked rightly: "Who can enumerate the many and various duties of these excellent soldiers?"

As from a particularly wrenching nightmare, the people of the valley gradually emerged from the collective trauma of the Frank Slide in a "sober" frame of mind. Within a few days the community was a hive of

activity geared to reconstruction. Territorial leader Frederick Haultain personally inspected the site, and authorized expenditure for the immediate construction of a wagon road through the slide area. It would not be long before the Canadian Pacific Railway had also re-routed its ruined tracks. Stewart called the rebuilding effort at Frank "a fair sample of Western town-making." What was sadly lacking, however, was any serious governmental effort to provide material relief for those bereaved, made homeless, or rendered without livelihood by the tragedy. While corporate losses were covered by insurance, personal losses were absorbed by individuals and, typically, the stricken community rallied to its own support by voluntary means.

The major principals in this affair were significantly undeterred by the Frank Slide. A special meeting of the officers of Canadian-American Coal and Coke convened at Frank on 20 May. It quickly resolved to resume operations after a supposedly "careful" inspection of Turtle Mountain. As filed in police reports the company minutes read in part: "It is desired to express gratitude to all those inhabitants who have rendered inestimable aid to this Company during the past and to assure its employees and other inhabitants that no expense will be spared to ensure their personal safety and welfare in the future." Workers who might otherwise have raised a voice of dissent were apparently mollified by the company's commitment to re-establish the productive capacity of the mines and provide necessary amenities including company-owned housing for the employees. An article published in the *Calgary Herald* on 6 April 1906 documented the phoenix-like revival of Frank. The workers' housing, it said, was "the finest in the district," with running water and electricity. Family formation in this frontier

settlement was evidently going ahead nicely, and post-slide Frank was said to have possessed, among other things, "the finest school buildings in southwestern Alberta."

Properly contextualized as an incident in the history of the local mining industry, however, the story of the Frank Slide could not have a happy ending. Apart from the usual problems of modest wages, insecure employment, and constant hazards on the job, miners still faced the especially difficult conditions of the so-called Turtle Mountain anticline. If the commitment of local managers to a more conservative policy of coal extraction may be taken in good faith, it clearly did not work. Turtle Mountain had already been badly looted and despite a buoyant market for steam coal, local output did not reach the 100,000-ton level again until 1906. In 1907-1908, when only 18,268 tons were produced in two years, Canadian-American Coal and Coke went effectively bankrupt.

The European investors who had been saddled with the property in 1903 successfully organized the recapitalization of a successor firm, Canadian Coal Consolidated (1908), with a head office listed as 113 Rue Reaumur, Paris, France: Maurice Tilloy, president. Production was no less erratic under the new regime, rising to 131,262 tons in 1910, and dropping to 15,403 tons in 1913. By way of comparison, the other French-owned firm in the valley, West Canadian Collieries, raised 621,334 tons of coal in 1910 and 598,128 tons in the falling market of 1913. That the Frank mines were probably unviable is shown by their statistics for 1910, when the operator paid out \$313,860 in wages and salaries, receiving only \$229,541 in coal sales. Canadian Coal Consolidated predictably went into financial receivership, but — incredibly — the story of the Frank colliery was not yet finished. A fourth consortium, called the Franco-Canadian Collieries, was organized to operate the mines in 1914: they raised 82,000 tons of coal in the severely depressed market of 1915. The Frank mines did enjoy a brief period of prosperity owing to wartime demands, raising 194,000 tons in 1916 and 108,000 tons in 1917. In July 1918, however, their portals finally closed forever.

The contest between coal operators and government inspectors continued through this period. Wrote one of the latter in 1910: "I cannot evade the conclusion that mining [here] is too dangerous to be continued. It is my firm belief that no more liberties can be safely taken with this mountain but that these [efforts] should be stopped at once." Felix Colomer, a member of the overlapping directorates of Canadian-American Coal and Coke and Canadian Coal Consolidated, protested to Arthur Sifton, the provincial minister responsible, to remind him of the jobs and investments at stake. If Sifton (brother to Clifford Sifton, former Minister of the Interior) overruled the "experts" on the main point at issue, the apparent corollary to a political decision that local mining could

continue was a decree that resulted in the abandonment of the town instead. By 1914, the original townsite of Frank (1911 population 806) was uninhabited, being part of a restricted federal land reserve at Turtle Mountain. This decision, which incidentally led to the ruin of a number of small local businesses — much to the benefit of Blairmore's merchant class — surely ought to have been made ten years before. It revealed once more the makeshift character of administrative authority in the Crow's Nest Pass coalfield, as well as the unstated principle that working miners *were* expendable.

As mining died out in Frank, a new village of the same name was relocated several miles to the west of the original townsite. It persisted for several more decades as a residential satellite of Blairmore: their 1931 populations, 263 and 1,629, respectively. Most of its menfolk worked for the West Canadian Collieries, the surviving piece of the web of French investment in the coalfield, which eked out an increasingly marginal existence during the difficult economic times of the 1920s and 30s. The unintended consequences of the Crow's Nest coal boom included a tradition of working-class bitterness: Blairmore in the Depression became a noted centre of radicalism, *Maclean's Magazine* calling it "the only settlement in the British Empire that is entirely controlled by the 'Red' element". In 1935, political defiance, however, was only a part of a larger legacy of self-reliance in the valley, rooted in hard lessons like that of 29 April 1903.

As the memoir of the Androz family concludes, "[We] survived the great disaster and so did others. But [we] will remember for all times the courage and sacrifices of men and women of the little town of Frank. We will remember the struggles and sacrifices of men and women like Michael & Sophia ... we pay great tribute to our fathers and mothers for their courage in hewing out of the wilderness the making of a great province and a great country." ♦

Allen Seager, who is in the history department, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, writes: "I should like to dedicate this piece to the memory of Charlie Drain of Blairmore (1913-1992), a fine local historian, among many other things, who first introduced me to the topic."

BOOKS IN REVIEW

On the Track of Cultures

By John Ayre

MARIUS BARBEAU
Man of Mana

By Laurence Nowry. NC Press, Toronto, 1996 445 pp., illus. \$27.95.

In the 1910s and 1920s, when native cultures were starting to fade, the federal government grudgingly found enough money through the Geological Survey of Canada to fund a determined, even obsessive, brotherhood of anthropologists to record the songs, tales and religious and social practices which still existed in the lives and memories of the elderly. The most engaging of this group was unquestionably Marius Barbeau, the subject of a new biography by Laurence Nowry. Working with Barbeau on a radio documentary in the mid-sixties and later profiling Barbeau in a TV documentary, Nowry is able to draw on an impressive depth of knowledge.

Nowry shows Barbeau starting his career in 1911 by tracking down a scattered handful of elderly and sometimes infirm Hurons in Canada and the United States. With a clumsy hand-cranked wax cylinder Edison machine, he recorded an oral culture which otherwise would have been very soon lost. At Franz Boas's urging he soon started recording hundreds of tales and songs of his own French Canadian culture. His work among the Niska, Tshimshian and Gitskan on the Skeena and Nass rivers in the 1920s was equally crucial. What separated Barbeau from such colleagues at the National Museum as Edward Sapir and Diamond Jenness was his almost evangelical sense of cultural trans-

mission. Although never associated with Quebec nationalism, Barbeau organized festivals of traditional Quebec music and handicrafts in 1927 and 1928 which restored a pride in culture then lacking in the province. Likewise he encouraged a crossbreeding of Western and native cultures by inviting such artists as Emily Carr and A.Y. Jackson to view and use Pacific Indian culture in their own work. Less compelling was his later weakness for crank diffusionist



Barbeau

theories he shared with Thor Heyerdahl which suggested, for example, that Pacific native culture had direct links with Asian Buddhism.

While exhaustively outlining Barbeau's work and voluminous writings, Nowry is particularly good at outlining the bureaucratic hazards that Barbeau and others had to face in doing their work. Both world wars and the Depression virtually wiped out budgets and the dour geologists who ran the National Museum largely saw anthropology — and Barbeau — as a frill. Barbeau kept his career

alive with a fair bit of artful dodging and cunning. A colourful journalist and cheerful workaholic, Barbeau managed to recycle his popular articles endlessly to enhance his meagre living in the 1930s.

A major fault with the biography is that Nowry seems more interested in compiling an encyclopedia about Barbeau rather than writing a well-paced narrative. While he is meticulous, he is frequently guilty of overkill. There is no reason we have to know the serial number of Barbeau's CPR rail pass in 1927 or that he paid \$186.95 income tax in 1959 or that Mrs. Barbeau insured her furs for \$1,000. Much interesting material on, for example, Jenness and Boas not directly related to Barbeau himself should have been put in a notes' section to prevent impeding the narrative. Nowry is not well served by his publisher who seems not to have hired a copyeditor to check style and usage and to ensure the simple reliability of the index. In its awkward form, however, Nowry has given us the portrait of a rare social scientist who was so eagerly packing three careers into one lifetime he didn't seem to suffer a single moment of unhappiness.

John Ayre has written extensively on North American cultures. He lives in Guelph, Ontario.

**GIVE THEM
THE BEAVER**

Young, Lean & Tough

By Laird Rankin

THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE CANADIAN COWBOY

By Hugh A. Dempsey. Fifth House Publishers, Saskatoon, 1995. 224 pp., illus. \$29.95.

Seldom seen on the big screen or on prime-time television, the Canadian cowpoke has languished in the shadow of his American/Hollywood counterpart. Until now. This book sets the record arrow-straight. It is a homage to our own Canadian cowboy in his heyday, his golden age, that ran roughly — but not roughshod — from the early 1880s to just this side of this century. Collateral to the tale, author Dempsey shows that once again Canadian history is as wild and woolly as any and can boast its own maple leaf brand of the good, the bad and the ugly, with horse opera names to boot. There was "Cowboy Joe" Gallagher, an ornery drunk who was at odds with the law most of his life; or, Belknap "Ballie" Buck, Canada's most respected cowboy, our own Roy Rogers.

Yet as history would ironically have it, Canada was dependent upon the States for its cowboy pioneers.

According to Dempsey, the Canadian cowboy began as an import: "The newly arrived cowboys were usually American, frequently young, and often lean and tough. And when they came, they not only brought cattle and horses with them, but also customs and traditions that could sometimes be traced back to Old Mexico and Spain." They came here in the early 1880s for a variety of reasons, such as the unique system of law and order in the West, thanks to the Mounties. Over the years, they were joined by "Ontario farm boys, English immigrants, and boys born on the Western frontier. They included Anglos, blacks, Mexicans, Indians, halfbreeds, and men from every social class on the continent."

From origins and role-models, Dempsey moves on to the vast, harsh landscape of cowboy life, from the dawn of the ranch to the birth of the rodeo. There was no life like it. Rather than romance and glamour or heroic adventure, it was a life of the more "true grit" variety, of dust and dirt and hardship, full of ten-gallon risks such as floods or prairie fires. Even a picturesque winding river could pose a threat: it could be a deadly crossing to a cattle drive. All this, plus the cattle rustlers, horse thieves, outlaws and lawmen added little sunshine to frontier life. The book ends when the New West begins, with the arrival of settlers who closed the open range and crowded out the cowboys, who were gone but not forgotten. In 1912 Guy Weadick launched the first Calgary Stampede in memory of the by-gone cowboy. Ironically, rather than serving as a memorial service, the Stampede has kept alive, in perpetuity, the pioneer cowboy spirit.

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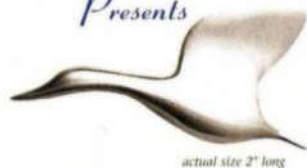
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group photos, the illustrative material in this book is both generous and fascinating. It also speaks well of the richness of the Glenbow Archives. Dempsey's style, however, is a mixed blessing. He certainly knows his subject and he writes with authority and in rich detail. You might think he lived, first-hand, all the stories, tales, anecdotes, robberies, plagues and shoot-outs in this book, or knew each member of the large cast of colourful characters on a first-name basis. The prose is clean, neat and orderly, like the design of the book itself. While the book has strong eye-appeal, too often the narrative is as flat as the land and its potential to be truly engrossing remains off in the distance, on the horizon.

Laird Rankin is Vice-President and Secretary of Canada's National History Society.

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A War Recalled

By Gavin Murphy

DAYS OF VICTORY

Canadians Remember: 1939-1945

By Ted and Alex Barris. Macmillan
Canada, Toronto, 1995. 304 pp., illus.
\$29.95.

Days of Victory is an entertaining and well-written book commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War. It effectively weaves the memories of Canadians who experienced the war around an historical overview, resulting in a balanced and thoughtful presentation.

This is the first book co-written by father and son Alex and Ted Barris, both well known authors. *Days of Victory* recounts the war through the recollections of more than 300 Canadians, including factory workers, nurses, war correspondents, entertainers, conscientious objectors, child evacuees, war brides, POWs and personnel from all the services. The authors also quotes liberally from other sources, providing added insight into the Canadian mood of the time.

Days of Victory includes accounts of events often ignored in other histories, such as the fate of child evacuees who came to Canada from Britain and the plight of Canadian POWs. The book also examines the lives of 30,000 German prisoners held in Canadian camps.

One evacuee, nine year-old Bill Brydon of Hepburn, near Newcastle, England, enjoyed his introduction into Canada. He says:

We got on this train, this long train, all the kids, and we were greeted by all the wonderful Canadians, coming out with candy from the towns. They had sodas and candy bars and flags,

and we thought, by God, this is heaven, you know.

Brydon liked Canada so much that he emigrated here in 1956 after returning to England at the end of the war.

Kay Christie and May Waters, nursing sisters at the Hong Kong hospital, have the dubious distinction of being the only Canadian female POWs during the war. The authors quote Christie's earlier interview with writer Bill McNeil as she describes the appalling Japanese treatment of a Canadian soldier after the colony's surrender. The deplorable physical and mental condition of Canadian prisoners released after VJ Day is noted — as is the fact that surviving veterans are still seeking adequate compensation from the government for their ordeal.

Several RCAF crewmen were held for a time at the infamous Buchenwald concentration camp. Ed Carter-Edwards was one of them. After being shot down over France, Carter-Edwards was betrayed by a collaborator and sent to Buchenwald. He was seriously ill with pneumonia and pleurisy on two occasions while in the camp and was sent to an "infirmary" where no medical treatment was provided. His life was saved when a French doctor and fellow prisoner found a syringe and drained the fluid from his lungs.

German prisoners generally had it easier than their Canadian counterparts in Europe and often better than Canadian civilians. About 1,000 former POWs settled in Canada after the war.

The mixing of personal experiences and history is extended to the selection of photographs for *Days of Victory*. Included are well recognized

images from government collections of the Dieppe raid, convoy assembly in Bedford Basin, Nova Scotia, and the German surrender in Holland in 1945. The book also features vintage pictures from private photo albums. These unique and often previously unpublished photographs allow the reader to put a face to some of the names in the book.

Even with the hardships encountered by troops overseas, few regretted enlisting. Many were young and lived life on the edge. As Hector Gaudet of the 4th Light Anti-Aircraft Battery explains: "It's an experience you couldn't buy for a million bucks...and you couldn't sell it again for a nickel."

Alex and Ted Barris make a good team. This book is a fitting tribute to those Canadians who helped Canada come of age as a nation during those days of victory half a century ago.

Gavin Murphy is an Ottawa lawyer and writer.

Books Received

James McGill of Montreal. By Stanley Brice Frost. McGill -Queen's University Press, 1995. 186 pp., illus. \$44.95 hardcover; \$15.95 paper.

Flying Canucks: Famous Canadian Aviators. By Peter Pigott. Hounslow Press Ltd., Toronto, 1994. 200 pp., illus. \$19.99.

Thelon: A River Sanctuary. By David F. Pelly. Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association, Hyde Park, Ontario, 1996. 256 pp., illus. \$26.95.

Battlefields in the Air: Canadians in the Allied Bomber Command. By Dan McCaffery. James Lorimer and Co., Toronto, 1995. 196 pp., illus. \$29.95.

Iroquois Fires: The Six Nations Lyrics and Lore of Dawendine. By Bernice Loft Winslow. Penumbra Press, Ottawa, 1995. 157 pp., illus. \$19.95.

Oak Island Secrets. By Mark Finnan. Formac Publishing, Halifax, 1995. 1177 pp., illus. \$16.95.

The Beaver / 51

THE PACKET

Letters, Notes and Opinion

Rumours of War

Christopher Moore's "Of Heroes and Housemaids" [*The Beaver*, December 1995/January 1996] left me perplexed. Mr. Moore contended that there was an unbridgeable gulf between The Canadian Historical Association (CHA) and the newly founded Organization for the Study of the National History of Canada (OSNHC), that strong enmities existed between leaders of the two historical bodies, and that graduate students in history and allied fields navigated the minefields between them in a state of constant trepidation.

Part of the reason for my perplexity was the fact that the mail that brought me the issue in which this alarmist column appeared also delivered an amicable letter from Professor Jack Granatstein, one of the founders of OSNHC. In his letter Professor Granatstein reciprocated the good wishes that I had conveyed earlier when I sent in my request and cheque for membership in OSNHC. He put it well when he expressed a "hope that the CHA & OSNHC can co-operate where joint interests are involved."

My bewilderment at the tone of Mr. Moore's column also arose in part from the fact that I had not noted any hostility towards the CHA at those portions of OSNHC's founding conference that I had been able to attend in late November in Ottawa. At the Organization's Business Meeting on 25 November, leaders of OSNHC had made it clear that they bore no ill will towards the CHA. I was able to report that the Executive and Council of CHA, which were meeting that weekend in Ottawa, similarly had not adopted a posture of hostility towards the Society. More informally, the half-dozen members of the CHA Council who were able

to attend OSNHC's convention banquet on 25 November experienced similarly kindly greetings and social interactions.

In other words, the reports of gulfs and hostilities between The Canadian Historical Association and the Organization for the Study of the National History of Canada are greatly exaggerated. Perhaps your columnist mistakes the sound of robust historical debate about topics and methodology for the cacophony of "history wars."

**J.R. Miller,
Vice-President,
Canadian Historical Association,
Ottawa, Ontario.**

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The Soldiers of Newfoundland

I read with considerable interest the brief article by Brian Hearn on the Royal Newfoundland Regiment [*The Beaver*, December 1995 /January 1996]. I commend you for giving the regiment, and thereby the military history of Newfoundland, some well-deserved attention. It seems therefore a shame that Mr. Hearn would include a number of historical fallacies in his treatment of the early history of Newfoundland's military experience. For instance, and notwithstanding the efforts of historians and historical geographers over the past 30 years to argue otherwise, he persists in claiming that British authorities banned permanent settlement in Newfoundland. And while the British may have been slower than the French to station a permanent garrison on the island, they did do so in 1697. Surely it is

therefore misleading to claim that the British refused to station a military force there. Indeed, the soldiers were perhaps a little too permanent. The detachment of the 59th Regiment had served in Newfoundland for nine years when they were relieved in 1774; the units of the 45th Regiment which they had relieved back in 1765 had been serving at Newfoundland since the unit was formed in 1717 — a total of nearly 50 years!

I also felt that Mr. Hearn overstates the importance of the militia at the expense of the regular soldiers who served in Newfoundland throughout the eighteenth century. Thus, he claims that the "hopelessly outnumbered Volunteers saved St. John's from attack...by giving the illusion of a powerful defence force." He then remarks: "Although that ruse worked, it was obvious that Newfoundland needed its own permanent military force, especially during the American Revolution." This analysis is flawed in three ways. First, the ruse to which Mr. Hearn is referring was the deception organized by Governor Wallace, using civilians, yes, but also garrison troops and sailors from his warships, to discourage an attack by a French force under Admiral de Richery. Second, that "ruse" occurred in 1796, twenty years *after* the American Revolution (not before, as Mr. Hearn's discussion would lead us believe) and third, it occurred long after Newfoundland acquired a permanent military force — nearly a hundred years after, in fact — and can therefore hardly be credited with having played a part in the decision to establish a permanent military force on the island. Incidentally, de Richery's decision to withdraw was shaped at least in part by the strong harbour defences and batteries that had been installed after the war with France broke out in 1793, and may have been influenced even more by the failure of another squadron to

join de Richery in his raid on the British Newfoundland fishery.

On yet another point, I would suggest that Mr. Hearn has misunderstood the nature of the American privateering threat to Newfoundland. Privateers were rarely a problem at Newfoundland in 1776 and even in 1777 they continued to leave the inshore fishery alone, though they caused serious damage to the off-shore bank fishery. By 1778 the bank fishery had to all intents and purposes been abandoned under the combined strain of a labour shortage and the activity of the privateers. It was only then, and for the first time, that the coastal settlements also came under attack, especially on the South Coast which was adjacent to the trans-Atlantic trade lanes that were the main attraction for privateers operating in the region. The settlements north of St. John's were hardly touched at all by privateers. The Americans *never* posed a threat to St. John's, and as for the risk they posed to the movement of supplies to Newfoundland, their greatest impact was simply in refusing to trade with Newfoundland. The Americans played an indispensable role in furnishing the Newfoundland fishery with provisions prior to the American Revolution. For instance, 175 American trading vessels were recorded as coming to Newfoundland in 1774. In 1775, this number fell to 66. Then, in 1776, only three American vessels came to Newfoundland. It was the refusal of American merchants to trade with Newfoundland, not the threat that their privateers posed to the fishery, that caused severe hardship within the fishery during the 1776-1783 war.

Finally, it is an over-simplification to suggest that Robert Pringle established his militia because Great Britain could spare Newfoundland no troops. The British authorities provided Newfoundland with precisely as many troops as were

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probably needed to meet any threat likely to be faced by the fishery. Pringle was an enthusiastic promoter of a local militia almost certainly because of the way in which this would advance his career. Thus, when he arrived in Newfoundland in 1772, Pringle was only a lieutenant; by the end of the war, he was a lieutenant-colonel. The militia, which he had promoted enthusiastically almost from the moment of his arrival in Newfoundland, began as an auxiliary armed force using the labourers then employed on the new fortifications at St. John's. Then it became a militia "Corps of Volunteers," and eventually a provincial unit, the Newfoundland Regiment. With each transformation, Pringle rose in rank. By 1783, he was a lieutenant-colonel of the Newfoundland Regiment. It was surely as much to advance his career and rank in this way that Pringle worked to create his militia. Alas for his ambitions, the Newfoundland Regiment was disbanded when the war ended, and Pringle reverted to his rank, by then that of Major, in the Royal Engineers.

Olaf Janzen,
Department of History,
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College,
Memorial University,
Corner Brook, Newfoundland.



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Bluenose Legend

Your June/July 1995 issue contained a very well-researched article by Bill Wolferstan entitled "Daughters of the Wind." As a Nova Scotian, it was with much enjoyment that I read this article.

However, the statement regarding the origin of the name "Bluenose" is one that I would like to address. The name Bluenose not only refers to this famous sailing ship but also is the name by which Nova Scotians are referred. Many times the derivation as offered in Mr.



Wolferstan's article has been repeated that it "came from the blue markings left when Nova Scotia fishermen wiped their noses with their hand-made, blue-dyed mittens."

This summer, while listening to CBC Radio, I heard the young lady who is the curator of the Fisheries Museum of the Atlantic at Lunenburg, N.S. being interviewed. One of the questions asked of her was "Why are Nova Scotians called Bluenosers?" This is the gist of her reply: Nova Scotians got that name because in 1787 Nova Scotia was famous for growing a blue potato which was shaped like a nose (bulbous).

Also, when [Thomas C.] Haliburton, the famous Nova Scotian judge and author, wrote his series of stories about Sam Slick, he also said it was because of the potato that the people got this name. These potatoes were considered the best in the world.

By 1900, Nova Scotians were called Bluenosers. It was not because they wore mittens dyed blue and when they wiped their noses the blue

dye got on their noses. In fact, it was considered bad luck to wear dyed mittens so they wore white mittens. It was thought to be bad luck to wear even grey mittens because it could signify death or disaster.

There was also the fact that the hulls of the sailing ships were painted black, and on the blue Atlantic they looked blue.

The ship *Bluenose* was named that because they wanted it to be the best in Nova Scotia.

Since I was interested in the subject, I copied the above information from the interview.

Audrey P. Hill,
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

Quebec In Canada

Ramsay Cook on
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THE BEAVER
 June/July



History On-Line

Bruce Elliott, a professor in Ottawa, studies emigrants — people who left the British Isles — and also immigrants — people who came to settle in Canada. It's a subject that makes for complicated research strategies. If he examines the emigrants from a parish in Scotland, how does he follow how they fared all over the world? On the other hand, if he studies the immigrants to some Canadian community, how does he link them to their starting points all over the world?

Via the Internet, maybe.

Sitting at his computer in Ottawa, Elliott recently opened up the "web site" of the British Columbia Archives and typed in names connected with one Robert McLeese, a nineteenth-century settler in the Cariboo, who had drawn Elliott's interest through the letters he wrote about the emigrant experience. Presto! up came a small flood of references to relevant documents, plus photos of a hotel McLeese owned in 1868 and even of a lake named after him. Elliott expects he will go to B.C. eventually to follow up, but half his work is done already. "In some respects it is better than searching the catalogues on site," Elliott recently reported. From the marriage of computers and communications comes a hint of how one historian will soon pursue his scattered sources.

Scholars still relatively youthful today easily recall the first phase of historians' relationship with computers. Until the 1980s, they laboriously encoded punched cards with their census data, their shipping records, or their price statistics, then booked time at the computing department so the university mainframe could grind out charts and correlations for them. Today the punched cards are history

themselves, and a desktop computer has all the power anyone needs. But only a minority of historians actually did, or do, those kind of studies involving calculations about masses of quantified data. It was the word processor, a wonderful combination of typewriter and filing cabinet, that persuaded most historians to take to the personal computer in the 1980s.

Now the 'Net and the Web are launching the third stage of this evolving relationship by connecting all those desktop computers together for instant and global exchanges. To find out how historians are adapting the Internet to their purposes, I turned to a corner of the Internet called "H-Canada." H-Canada is the Canadian history branch of H-Net, an international network with subsections for every historical speciality anyone can think of: H-Albion for historians of Britain, H-Demog for demographers, H-Labor for labour historians, and fifty more, plus many more independent networks. Each section of H-Net is a computer version of a subscription service. More than 500 historians of Canada now subscribe to H-Canada, and the messages any of them address to H-Canada go instantly to the computers of them all.

As Dave De Brou, a history professor at the university of Saskatchewan and H-Canada's moderator, describes it, H-Can and services like it are "narrowcasting," providing a new way for people with a specialized interest, in this case Canadian history, to keep in touch with others in the same field, without bothering everyone who is not interested. De Brou happens to be a specialist in nineteenth-century Quebec. Few people in Saskatoon share that specific interest, but on the Internet he can now chat, argue, or exchange information with many

fellow scholars. "What I find most exciting is the way it breaks down the isolation," says De Brou. Jose Igartua of the Université de Montréal, who headed the committee of the Canadian Historical Association that launched H-Canada, likes to call it "the invisible college."

H-Can turned one year old in February. Soon after, I sent my own question, asking its subscribers how they saw the Internet changing historians' practices? Within a few days I had a couple of dozen replies — and sparked some lively discussion of the issue among the subscribers.

The replies were enthusiastic, and they varied greatly. Only a few reported using their computers to tap right into distant archives to do research the way Bruce Elliott did. And some who had expressed concern about research via Internet. "Documents" now available may have been typed or scanned in by enthusiastic volunteers, with little concern for scholarly accuracy, for copyright, or for the various versions of a document that may exist. The "peer review" that regulates most academic publication does not apply when historians "publish" themselves or their documents on the Internet. Doug Sprague of the University of Manitoba celebrated the fall of "the gatekeepers," as presaging the end of centralized and often biased control of knowledge, but concerns about quality control still lurk close to the surface in the world of electronic publishing.

Some professors already teach via Internet. A York university course in East Asian history goes simultaneously to students in Hong Kong and Australia. Gil Stelter recently put the course lectures and research materials for a University of Guelph urban history class on-line. His students can

use computers to study and consult international experts Stelter recruited for the project. Access and interchange goes on non-stop. When it works, the structure of teaching and learning is changed. "I think we are on the edge of a revolution," says Stelter of the teaching possibilities.

Most historians, however, most often use the Internet just to keep in touch. A lot of what H-Canada distributes — conference announcements, job postings — resembles the faculty bulletin board gone into cyberspace, and for the rest of us it's just as dull. Then suddenly a spark is struck, and 500 spectators watch some arcane query or comment galvanize the half-dozen experts into a flurry of argument. Sometimes the speed and distance alone are impressive. Patricio Mason, starting a Canadian history course in Santiago, Chile, and desperate for Spanish-language materials, put up a message not long ago. In Toronto I knew *The Illustrated History of Canada*, to which I contributed a chapter, had been translated by a Mexican publisher a couple of years ago. In an electronic flicker he found his text, and maybe my co-authors and I earned a nickel in royalties.

So far these kind of random, limitless connections seem to be what appeals most to historians using the Internet. Saskatchewan's Steve Hewitt sees Internet links as a "tool of empowerment for my generation (twenty-something). We are more technologically versed than [the previous generation], and technology increasingly means power." Patricia Wood, a Canadian at Duke University in the U.S., finds in the Internet "the only place where scholars gather and can't pick their conversation partners. They can't exclude women, men, junior faculty, people they don't know or whomever else they may not choose to be around. So everyone can benefit."

This optimism is reflected in most academic opinion about the Internet, and it rather surprised me. About 40% of H-Canada subscribers

are grad students (another 20% are non-academic historians) but, over the year I have watched it, it has seemed the tenured and prominent come to the fore when H-Canada discussion gets lively. The voice of wisdom and experience, I had wondered, or just the intricate deference hierarchies of university life being reproduced electronically?

Amid the talk of equality and democratization, none of the academically-affiliated commentators mentioned the cost of living in cyberspace. The Internet was born in linkages between universities and research agencies, and for academics most of its costs are buried in university budgets. Having had Internet access conferred on me for the last 18 months by an institution I have been doing research for, I have recently had to confront the daunting cost of providing equivalent access for myself now that the project is



ending. To confirm how much being electronically connected is mostly an additional fringe benefit provided to the already well-connected, I had to go beyond the university historians.

The Ontario Historical Society represents scores of local historical societies as well as a substantial scholarly membership. As executive director Dorothy Duncan notes, most of those societies lack offices and staff, let alone the sophisticated computers and communications budgets that serious Internet participation demands. For them Internet access depends on donations by volunteers or friendly organizations. The OHS itself recently determined that to open its own Web site, it would need full-time staff to run it properly. The cost, it decided, outweighed the benefits. Duncan notes it was non-academic members of her board who warily insisted on cost-benefit analy-

sis, while her academic directors tended to favour jumping in.

Victor Rudik of the 7,000-member Ontario Genealogical Society told me at once that the Internet already looks like "the biggest change since microfilm" for genealogists. Many genealogists have already discovered commercial genealogy software packages that efficiently turn data into family trees and even scan old family pictures into the final text. The OGS has developed a web site, and it is becoming a powerful tool enabling family history researching to trace lineages all over the world. Yet Rudik too is alert to the costs. "The reality is, if you open a site, you have to maintain it. Managing expectations is the problem."

The OGS, in fact, has been part of a pioneering project in making elaborate data banks widely available. Care to check something from the 1871 census of Ontario? It's available electronically to anyone who cares to examine it. The census also teaches a lesson about the resources the electronic historian must command. "Digitizing" one census year for one province took twelve years' work by 400 volunteer genealogists organized by the OGS, plus academic support, plus the National Archives of Canada, which holds the census data and now makes it available on its web site. As archives build up collections of computerized materials, however, electronic research seems poised to explode in significance.

For anyone seeking information about history, the possibilities of the new interconnected digital world truly are fascinating. The Internet may well be creating a new hierarchy of research, dividing those who can imagine it is free from those who must bear the costs. But for anyone seriously involved in doing history, "can we afford it?" must now be linked to "can we afford to be without it?" ♦

THE SOCIETY

Teaching Award Launched

The Society's national program to recognize Canadian history teachers was launched in mid-January. Over 15,000 teachers, principals, school boards, teachers' associations and departments of education received complete information on the program in the form of a colourful, bilingual leaflet that describes the program in detail.

Officially called the Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History, the program is open to all teachers of the subject in Grades 1 through 12, and OAC in Ontario. Twelve finalists will be selected and, together with a guest, flown to Ottawa in August, in order to attend the awards ceremony and banquet. Each finalist will receive a certificate and a cash prize of \$500. A grand prize winner, to be selected from among the finalists, will receive a medal, a cash prize of \$5,000 and a computer with CD-Rom capability for his or her school. Submissions to the 1996 competition close on May 3. A leaflet about the program is available from the Society's office in Winnipeg.

The awards program is being developed with the assistance of CoEd Communications of Toronto, a firm that specializes in the development, production and evaluation of supplementary educational programs for the public school system.

A number of Canadian companies are also supporting the program. They include Bell Canada, the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Investors Group and the University of Toronto Press. Their support is gratefully acknowledged.

New on the 'Net

Since the Society went on the internet last October, its home page has been overhauled and expanded. In world wide web terms it was "under construction".

Originally, the home page contained information on the Society itself, membership information, and extracts from *The Beaver*. The home page has since been expanded to include information on other Society activities such as its teaching awards (see above), the Pierre Berton



Award and its joint venture with the Canadian Historical Association to continue to publish its series of historical booklets. (The backlist of those booklets is also included.) The section on *The Beaver* has been expanded to include more articles and a subscription form. And, with the exception of *The Beaver*, the page is available in French.

If you would like to visit our home page, it can be reached at <http://www.cyberpsc.mb.ca/~otmw/cnhs/cnhs.html>. The page is intended for use with Netscape 1.1 or better.

Life Lines

In January and February this year, approximately 5,000 Society members received information by mail the Seaboard Life Insurance Company about a voluntary life insurance program it has proposed to the Society. The program offers permanent life insurance to Society members between the ages of 50 and 84, without medical examination and regardless of health. The coverage available is limited to a maximum of \$20,000.

The mailings were a "test" to gauge member interest in the product and thereby determine whether or not to proceed further. As of the end of February, the results were encouraging. However, a final

decision to extend the program to all members will not be made until April.

Subscribers to *The Beaver* are automatically members of the Society. Any one preferring not to receive the insurance mailings - or mailings from organizations who rent our data base - are asked to advise the Society.

Offshore Onside

The Newfoundland Historical Society (NHS) is the fifth provincial historical association to receive support from the Society.

Under this program, launched in 1995, the Society provides up to \$5,000 a year, for three years, to the principal historical association in each province to enable it to further an existing program or introduce a new one. In either case, the program must promote an appreciation of and awareness in history on a province-wide basis. The Society is currently funding such programs in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, the Yukon and now Newfoundland. The program will be expanded as resources permit.

The Newfoundland organization will use its support to undertake an ambitious outreach program. It is designed to increase the presence of the NHS outside its hometown of St. John's, a problem faced by many sister organizations across the country.

Thank You

The Society wishes to acknowledge, with thanks, the support it receives from the Hudson's Bay History Foundation. The principal funding for the Society's activities is from the foundation and the support is subject to an annual request for funds. The Society has received grants from the Foundation for the last three years.

The Hudson's Bay History Foundation was established in 1994 as a result of gifts by the Bay to the province of Manitoba of its corporate archives and museum collection. The foundation ensures funding for the future care and management of the gifts and also provides support to the Society.



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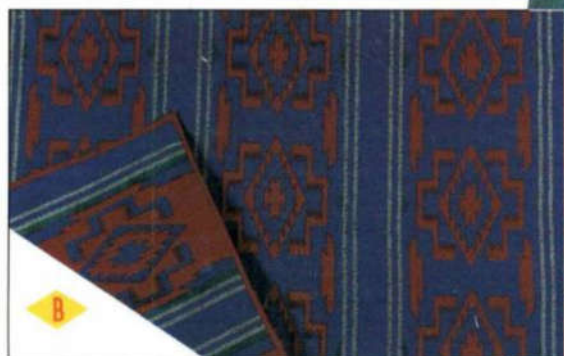
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